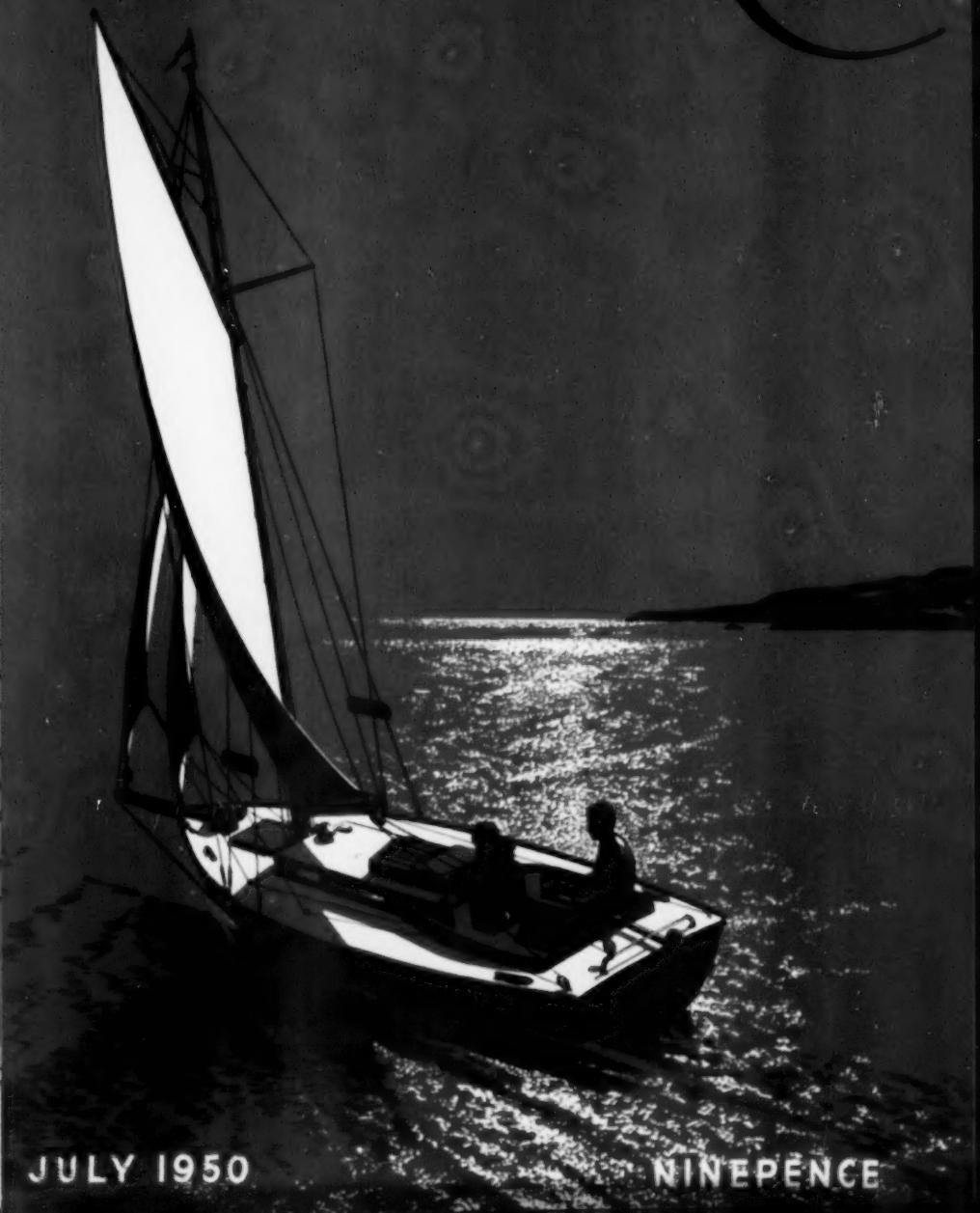


Amateur

CINE WORLD



JULY 1950

NINEPENCE

R. G. LEWIS LTD 202 HIGH HOLBORN, W.C.I

If it's CINE and GOOD — it's at '202'
BRANCHES in STRAND & SHREWSBURY

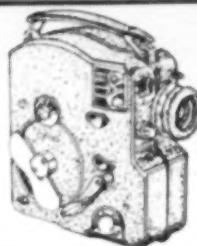
CHANCERY 5208



8mm. FILMING DE LUXE

What could we say less, and what can one say more? There, in the compactest of all nutshells, is just what it means to use a Camex 8 camera: 8mm. filming in de Luxe style, with de Luxe equipment, producing de Luxe results. Printed words could never convey what sheer pleasure it is to use this fine equipment, so we do hope you can come along to "202" in order to handle for yourself the incomparable

CAMEX 8, f/1.9 Berthiot, with E.R.C.	£59 13 2
Hyper Cinor Wide Angle Lens	... £13 19 6
2in. f/3.5 Berthiot Cinor	... £22 18 9



ARISTOCRACY in 16mm.

Every race breeds an aristocracy, and in every field of competitive production there is one marque that stands apart from its fellows. In substandard cinematography, the aristocrat of cameras is unquestionably the

PAILLARD-BOLEX H16

which we illustrate here. (We would welcome the opportunity to send you full details, and quote for your present equipment in exchange.)

H16 Paillard Bolex, f/2.5 Yvar	... £147 16 3
H16 Paillard Bolex, f/1.9 Genevar	£173 12 3

PORABILITY-PLUS

Meopta's "Atom 8" projector, using a 200w. lamp, and operating direct from any voltage between 115v. and 240v., takes standard 200 ft. spools, and throws a remarkably brilliant 4' 6" picture in spite of its diminutive size. Complete with its strong 10" x 9" x 6" carrying case, the "Atom" weighs less than 9 lb. — it is a first-class job at the price.

MEOPTA 8mm. "Atom 8"
Projector, complete with case £25 0 0

SERICRAFT TITLING OUTFIT

The latest titling outfit to appear is the Sericraft, which comprises the whole "works," including 180 felt letters, etc. May we send you full particulars?

Sericraft Titling Outfit ... £3 10 0

For use with it, we most strongly recommend the

Wakefield Universal Titler ... £9 17 6

IS EDITING REALLY WORTH WHILE?

One might equally query whether telephoto lenses are necessary — show us the cinematographer who gives pleasure to his audience by doing no more with his processed films than splicing them together, and we'll be seeing a miracle man! Scenes worth shooting are scenes worth editing, and for that purpose we have three main recommendations. These are

- **THE YADE ANIMATED EDITOR**
VIEWER for 16mm. films £25 0 0
- **THE HAYNOR ANIMATED**
EDITOR VIEWER, in separate models
for 8mm., 9.5mm. and 16mm. users
£6 6 0
- **THE "202" 16mm. CINE FILM**
INSPECTION VIEWER, focusing
£1 15 0

(Literature on request)



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	£	s.	d.
mm. G.I.C., f/2.5 coated lens	39	19	1
mm. Keystone, f/3.5 lens	41	7	8
mm. Dekko 110, f/2.5 lens, var. speeds, single shots	45	3	0
mm. Dekko 110, fitted with f/1.9 Dall- meyer lens	53	0	8
mm. Bell & Howell 'Sportster,' f/2.5 lens	57	9	3
mm. Pathé 'H,' single speed, f/2.5 lens	28	13	4
mm. Pathé 'H,' var. speed, f/2.5 lens	30	2	0
mm. Pathé Webo, f/2.5 lens	30	2	0
mm. Dekko 104, f/2.5 lens, single shots	32	5	0
mm. Pathé 'H,' single speed, f/1.9 lens	34	13	8
mm. Dekko 104, fitted with f/1.9 lens	39	8	4
mm. Pathé Webo, fitted with f/1.9 lens	43	0	0
6mm. G.I.C. f/1.9 focusing lens	47	6	0
6mm. Keystone A.12, f/2.5 lens in turret	75	12	4
6mm. Paillard Bolex H.16, f/2.5 lens in turret, variable speeds, single shots, backwind, reflex focusing	147	16	3
Paillard Bolex H.16 with Switar f/1.4 lens	203	4	10

PROJECTORS

	£	s.	d.
8mm. Kodak 46, 200 watt lamp	33	0	0
8mm. Specto Standard, 200 watt lamp	36	0	0
8mm. Dekko, 500 watt lamp	37	10	0
9.5mm. Specto Standard, 100 watt lamp	36	0	0
9.5mm. Pathé Gem, 12v. 100w. lamp	37	10	0
9.5mm. Specto Educational, 50v. 250w. lamp	48	10	0
16mm. Specto Standard, 200 watt lamp	36	0	0
16mm. Pathé Gem, 12v. 100 watt lamp	40	0	0
16mm. Ampro Imperial, 750 watt lamp	99	10	0
16mm. Bell & Howell 602, 750 watt lamp	100	10	0
16mm. Sound Ampro Premier 20, single case	199	0	0
16mm. Sound Ampro Premier 20, 1,000w. lamp	213	0	0
16mm. Sound Victor Grayline, 750w. lamp	220	0	0
16mm. Sound B.T.H. 301, 750 watt lamp	220	0	0
16mm. Sound Bell & Howell 'Compact'	210	10	0
16mm. Sound Bell & Howell Model 601, 750w. lamp	237	10	0
16mm. Sound Debie D.16, 750 watt lamp	264	0	0
16mm. Sound Bell & Howell 609 arc projector (ask for a demonstration)	650	0	0

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SECONDHAND

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mm. Eumig, f/2.5 Lens, Battery driven	20	0	0
mm. Revere 88, f/2.5 Lens, variable speeds	32	10	0
mm. Paillard-Bolex H.8, Three lenses in turret	125	0	0
mm. Coronet, f/3.9 Lens, Standard chargers	8	0	0
mm. Pathé, Model B, f/3.5 Lens	8	0	0
mm. Pathé Lux, f/3.5 Lens	10	0	0
mm. Pathé "H," f/3.5 Lens, Single shots, Case	13	0	0
mm. Cine Nizo, f/2.9 Lens	15	0	0

PROJECTORS

	£	s.	d.
9.5mm. Dekko, f/1.9 Lens, Single shot, variable speeds	22	10	0
16mm. Cine Kodak BB, Jr., f/1.9 Lens, Case	47	10	0
16mm. Siemens, f/1.5 Dallmeyer Lens, 4 speeds, Single shots, Case and 4 cassettes	52	10	0
16mm. Magazine Kodak, f/1.9 Lens	80	0	0
16mm. Paillard Bolex H.16, Three Lenses, Case	210	0	0
16mm. Bell & Howell 70DE, Three Cooke Lenses, Back wind, Turret finder	250	0	0

THIS MONTH'S 'SNIP'

	£	s.	d.
16mm. Siemens Camera with f/3.5 Lens, 50' Capacity, 2 Cassettes	17	10	0
16mm. Projector, Eumig with 200 watt lamp, Case	22	10	0
Complete 16mm. Movie Equipment for	640	0	0

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16mm. B.T.H. 301 Sound Projector (List £220), bargain at	£145 0 0
16mm. Victor Sound Projector (List £220), bargain at	£165 0 0
Both machines are slightly shop-soiled, but in perfect condition. May be seen and demonstrated at	
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mm. Specto	£36 0 0
mm. B. & H. Gaumont	£57 0 0
mm. Dekko (500w.)	£39 10 0
5mm. Pathé "Gem"	£37 10 0
5mm. Pathé "Ace"	£35 10 0
5mm. Specto	£36 0 0
Motor for Ace Projector	£5 0 0
mm. B. & H. Gaumont 602	£100 10 0
mm. B. & H. Gaumont (Sound)	£237 10 0
mm. B. & H. Gaumont (Compact Model)	£210 0 0
mm. Pathé "Gem"	£40 0 0
mm. Specto	£36 0 0

CAMERAS AND LENSES

5mm. Dekko f/1.9	£26 10 0
5mm. Ditmar f/2.5 (2 speeds)	£21 0 0
mm. B. & H. Gaumont Sportster	£57 9 3
5mm. Pathé H f/1.9	£34 13 8
mm. G.I.C. f/1.9 (coated)	£47 6 0
f/1.9 Dallmeyer Telephoto	£18 1 2
f/1.9 Dallmeyer (8mm.)	£15 1 0
f/3.5 Coated Cooke (8mm.)	£22 11 6
mm. G.I.C. f/1.9 (coated)	£47 6 0

MISCELLANEOUS

WESTON MASTER METER	£9 15 0
Manual of Sub-Standard Cinematography	£1 1 0
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8mm. Popular Splicer	£1 17 6
9.5mm. Popular Splicer	£5 5 0
Ensign Universal Splicer	£4 6 0
Johnson 16mm. Precision Splicer	£4 6 0
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9.5mm. 30ft. ... 5 0

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47 BERKELEY STREET

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mm. Sportster f/2.5, bloomed	£57 9 3
5mm. Pathé II, f/2.5, single speed	£28 13 4
5mm. Keystone A9, f/2.5, coated, 100'	£62 19 11
5mm. Keystone A12, f/1.9, coated, turret head for two lenses	£98 16 6
6mm. Keystone Magazine load, f/1.9, coated	£95 17 6
6mm. Paillard H.16, 3 Kern lenses	£285 0 7

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16mm.
8mm.
9.5mm.

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S/HAND CAMERAS AND PROJECTORS

16mm. Bell & Howell 700A, turret head, 3 lenses, case	£239 10 0
16mm. Bolex H.16, turret head, 3 lenses, case, etc.	£255 0 0
16mm. Bell & Howell 70D, turret head, 3 lenses, case	£165 0 0
16mm. Zeiss Movikon, f/1.4 Sonnar lens and case	£195 15 0
16mm. Kodak Magazine Camera, f/1.9 £81 10 0	

WESTON CINE METER

£9 15 0

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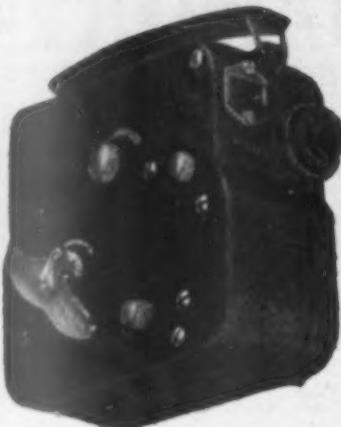
Ferquin Animated Viewer, 16mm.	£29 10 0
Celestion Cine Tripod	£14 8 10
London Tripod	£10 4 3
P.S. Inspection Viewer	£2 12 6
Ensign Popular Splicer	£1 17 6
Ensign Universal Splicer	£5 5 0
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Also 8mm. and 16mm. Movie Paks and other films for Projectors.	

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mm. Universal Projector, 500w.	£36 10 0
5mm. Specto Projector	£36 0 0
6mm. G. B. & H. 602 "Compact" sound projector	£110 0 0
6mm. G. B. & H. 601 Projector, sound	£237 10 0
mm. Dekko Projector, 500w.	£39 10 0
mm. Specto Projector	£36 0 0

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NEW 9.5MM. CINE COMPETITIONS?

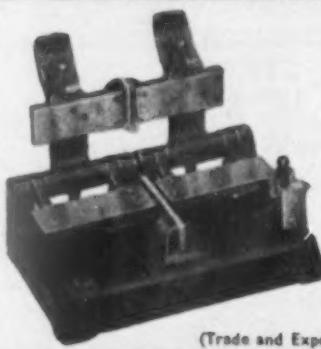


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16mm. 50ft. & 100ft. daylight loading spools.
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33ft. Rolls single-8 for darkroom loading into Movex Cassettes
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16mm. Sound. Matton Supersound; 500 watts	£80	0	0
16mm. Kaylee NP3, 300 watt, case	£35	0	0
16mm. Eumig Super, 300/500 watt, reverse and still picture, case	£52	0	0
16mm. Pathé "Gem", 900ft. arms	£40	0	0
16mm. Ace Sound Unit for "Gem"	£52	10	0
16mm. Specto, 100 watt, slightly used	£33	0	0
16mm. Ensign, 100 watt	£11	10	0
16mm. Kodacolor, 250 watt	£10	0	0
8mm. Dekko IIBA, 500 watt	£39	10	0
8mm. Bell & Howell 606, 400 watt, case	£62	0	0
8mm. Specto, 200 watt, demonstration model	£33	0	0
9.5mm. Sound. Pathé "Pax", 400 watt; a fine projector for home use	£165	0	0
9.5mm. Pathé "Gem," 100 watt, 900ft.	£37	10	0
9.5mm. Ace Sound Unit for "Gem"	£44	2	0
9.5mm. Pathé "H," 200 watt, 900ft.	£27	0	0
9.5mm. Triplico, 50 watt, as new	£15	0	0
9.5mm. Keystone, 100 watt	£15	0	0
9.5mm. Dekko, 50 watt, AC/DC, New	£20	0	0

WHEN SENDING REMITTANCES—please allow for postage or carriage

CAMERAS			
16mm. G.I.C. Camera, f/1.9 focusing, interchangeable lens	£47	6	0
8mm. Dekko, f/2.5, variable speeds, double run	£45	3	0
8mm. Bell & Howell-Gaumont "Sportster," f/2.5, variable speeds, double run	£53	15	0
8mm. Agfa "Movex," f/2.8, single run, case, two loaded chargers, perfect condition	£21	0	0
9.5mm. Pathé-Webo, f/1.9 focusing lens (takes 50ft. magazines)	£43	0	0
9.5mm. Pathé "H," f/2.5, variable speeds, new	£30	2	0
9.5mm. Dekko, f/2.5, variable speeds, new	£32	5	0
9.5mm. As above, slightly used, guard	£28	0	0
9.5mm. Pathé Motocamera, f/3.5 lens	£9	15	0
9.5mm. Coronet, f/3.9 lens	£5	0	0

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Photax collapsible stand	£3	3	0
Maynor Animated Viewer, any gauge	£5	12	6
Photo-Science Illuminated Viewer	£2	12	6
'Sofil' Sound Head for 200B	£7	0	0
Heavy Pan and Tilt Head	£2	7	6
16mm. 1,600ft. Rewinder, used	£3	0	0

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1950

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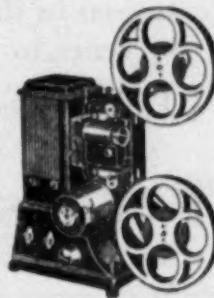
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8mm. Cine Kodak Model 8/20 camera, with interchangeable f/1.9 lens, also 1 1/2" f/4 Dallmeyer Popular Telephoto, and 3" f/4 Dallmeyer Telephoto lenses, all interchangeable. Complete with carrying case ... £45 0 0

8mm. Paillard Bolex HB camera, with visual focusing, variable speeds. Single pictures, wind-back for double exposures. Complete with Dallmeyer f/1.9 lens in focusing mount, and also 1 1/2" f/4 Popular Telephoto lens, carrying case ... £110 0 0

8mm. Siemens Model 8R camera, with f/2.2 fixed focus lens. Complete with carrying case.

£32 0 0

8mm. Eumig Double Run Camera, complete with built-in Coupled Exposure Meter, 3 speeds, 8, 16, 32 f.p.s., with f/2.7 Schneider Kinoplan, and carrying case

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8mm. Emel Single Speed Double Run camera, with Berthiot f/2.5 Cinor lens, bloomed, interchangeable, complete with case

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8mm. Keystone Projector, with 500 watt lamp, Resistance, for A.C. or D.C. Complete with carrying case. A very nice outfit

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9.5mm. Pathescope Model 'H' Motocamera, with f/2.5 lens and variable speeds, from 10 to 32 f.p.s. £23 0 0

9.5mm. Pathescope WEBO camera, 50ft. cassette loading camera, in very good condition, with interchangeable f/1.9 Berthiot lens in focusing mount. (Films in cassettes are available)

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16mm. Ensign Super' Kinecam, variable speeds, with Dallmeyer 1" f/1.5 speed lens, and also 2" f/1.9 Dallmeyer long focus and 4" f/4.5 Dallmeyer Telephoto, filter and carrying case £90 0 0

16mm. Bell & Howell Model 70D camera, with variable speeds, interchangeable f/1.9 Dallmeyer lens and 2" f/2.9 Triple Anastigmat lens, also 3" f/4 Popular Telephoto lens, with case ... £145 0 0

16mm. SECOND-HAND SOUND PROJECTORS

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Marshall Bell & Howell projector, Model E4, 750 watt lamp, in new condition ... £100

B.T.H. latest type 301 with new lamphouse and 750 watt lamp in sound proof blimp. Only used 5 times ... £175

Amprosound Premier 20, complete with speaker and transformer. Only a few months old and in brand new condition £175

Marshall Bell-Howell Model B. In good order, 750 watt lamp, complete with speaker and transformer ... £80

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DeBrie projector, with 750 watt lamp. Complete with speaker and transformer, 15 watt output. Very good condition ... £145

For immediate attention by phone a "Personal" call saves time and money. Ask for MR. HOBSON Cine Dept.



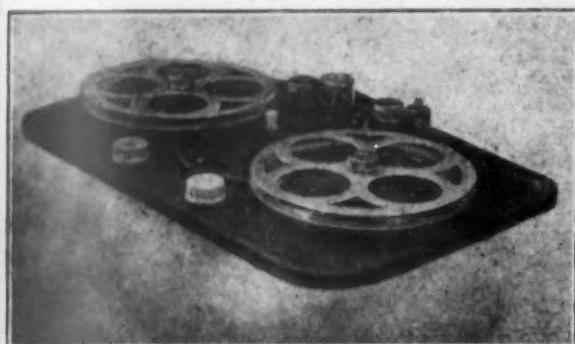
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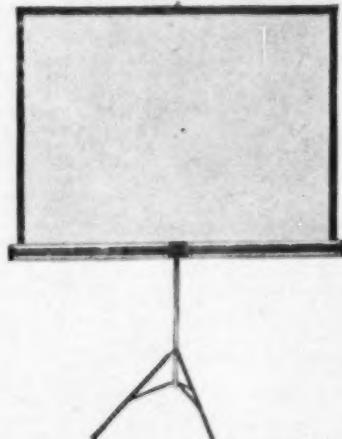
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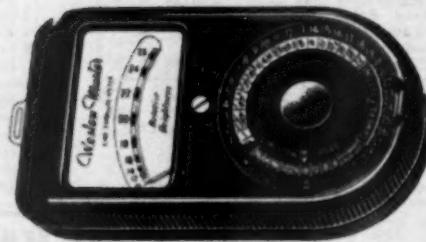
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CONTENTS

A Competition You Have Been Waiting For	218	Movie Maker's Diary. By Denys Davis	255
A Holiday Film That Is "Different"	221	Magnetic Recording : 2. Components for Your Magnetic Recorder. By Desmond Rose	257
A Little More Co-operation, Please ! By Walter Lassally	225	In Defence of the Unplanned Film. By Michael Cornell	261
What A Scare !: A Script for Filming. By Oswall Blakston	226	We Test the New Apparatus	262
Inventor's Delight 2 : What Do We Need To Know ? By Julien Caunter	229	Are You a Rain-maker ?	265
Filming Big Close-ups. By Sound Track	232	News from the Societies	273
Ideas Exchanged Here	235	Your Opportunity To See the A.C.W. 1949 National Amateur Film Awards	277
Monsters In Your Garden. By W. G. Baines	242	Films for the Home Show	279
Finding New Angles. By Leslie Wood	249	Your Problems Solved	280
Odd Shots. By George H. Sewell, F.R.P.S.	253		

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A Competition You Have Been Waiting For

"INTERMEDIATE TEN BEST" OFFERS OPPORTUNITY TO THE LESS EXPERIENCED WORKER

Here is a letter which, we feel sure, expresses the feelings of many of our readers :

Sir.—For some months I have had a horrible suspicion. You, sir, tell me that I am the heir of Griffith, the colleague of Eisenstein ; you exhort me by the example of the shoe-string "Bicycle Thieves" ; in fact, you almost persuaded me to get my camera out of its case and enter a film for the Ten Best competition. But all the time there has been the shadow of a suspicion . . . and now, sir, that shadow has become reality. For as I turn the pages of the May issue of your most excellent magazine do I not see Mr. Baines and Mr. Bowen confess to having used Filmo 70 DAs ? Are not Fourfold, judging by the sentry-like position of the members, carefully guarding an expensive piece of apparatus ?

I read on. Mr. Van Essen looks businesslike behind an apparent Paillard-Bolex, while Mr. Bulleid appears to examine the focus of a similar instrument (focusing ? Never 'card of it !). Mr. Rose has written a book and Mr. Birrell leaves me breathless—he owns two B. & H. projectors ! Only Mr. James has my sympathy, and I have yet to learn what equipment he borrowed.



This frame enlargement of a shot from "Paper Boat," one of the A.C.W. National Amateur Film Awards, comes from a sequence in which the hero roughs out sketches to amuse the small son of the girl with whom he falls in love. The husband is an ardent angler. Subconsciously, or with malicious intent, the young man sketches a fish.

Alas ! Back to my fixed focus Coronet Cine and my shattered dreams ! Or am I, as Mr. Standen so delicately puts it, talking through the top of my lamphouse ?

In all seriousness, however, I would like to know how much value you set on technique as well as artistry. I have nothing but admiration for the policy of a magazine which caters for the shoe-string amateur equally with the wealthiest expert and which strives so much to raise the level of amateur films. However, if the result of the recent competitions is any clue, the Ten Best competition, organised as it is at the moment, is not by any means the reflection and culmination of the magazine's declared policy. Leave the competition as it is by all means but make it clear that only the Olympians of the amateur film world have any real hope of a major prize.

If, however, all comers are urged to enter, then study the more limited technique of the humbler amateur with his humbler equipment, and give us another competition with carefully graded sections. To continue as at the moment is merely to urge the Austin Seven owner to enter the race on the grounds that he can be just as good a driver as any other, and then to award the prize to the Bentley owner on the grounds that he went the fastest.

I may say that nothing I have written or feel will deter me in the slightest from having a shot soon at the Ten Best !

*Druid Stoke Avenue, K. A. S. Pople.
Bristol, 9.*

Now there *are* answers to all the points made by our correspondent, but we do admit that they are not completely conclusive and satisfying ones. We could point to the fact that by far the greater part of "Post Haste", chief prizewinner among of the 1949 National Amateur Film Awards, was taken with a one-inch lens. *But* Mr. Gaskell, the producer, had other lenses as well, and used them.

We could point to the fact that *all* of "Paper Boat," another cash prize winner, was taken with an old fixed focus f/3.5 Stewart Warner. You may recall that in our January issue the cameraman was quoted as saying: "I'm convinced now that shortage of cash was a blessing in disguise. The whole beauty of such a simple camera is that it leaves me free to concentrate on the action. I can move from one set-up to another without bothering about change of focus, and this helps me to get the feeling of a whole sequence as I go along rather than thinking of each shot on its own. Perhaps all this will sound very childish to an experienced technician, but to me it's important." *But* the director is a very able film publicist and has written a very good book for amateurs like himself on how to direct amateur films.

The comparison our correspondent draws between the Austin Seven and the Bentley is not really very apt. The competition is not for the purpose of discovering the "fastest car" but is designed to test "skill in driving." It is *not* easier to use an elaborate camera than it is a modest one, *but* for certain effects the former obviously has great advantages. The successful film is one made within the capabilities and means of the producer—a producer who (to mix the metaphors again) knows how to cut his coat according to the cloth.

Where our correspondent does score a bull's-eye is in his statement that in the Ten Best competition "only the Olympians of the amateur film world have any real hope of a major prize." That is perfectly true. We can cite many cases of beginners carrying off the major awards but they have been beginners of distinctive ability who have a real flair for film making. The less gifted must be content to plod along, disappointed at getting no recognition of their work and seeing no hope of things ever being any different. And so long as they fail to receive encouragement it is unlikely that their work will materially improve, and things won't be any different.

Now while *Amateur Cine World* does what it can to encourage the finest work and to provide you with opportunities



Two shots from the comedy, "Only for Telling," one of the films you will have an opportunity of seeing when the Ten Best come to your district (See show diary on page 277). Top picture is from the armoured knights' duel section, the second from the custard pie sequences.

of seeing and learning from it, we do realise that the Ten Best competition cannot afford direct help and encouragement to the man who hesitates to match his skill against the Olympians—or the people he looks on as Olympians. And he is the very man we want and ought to help and encourage.

We want to help you to use film creatively. We want to assist the less expert to greater confidence and skill. We want you to feel that we do realise your problems and difficulties. We want to show you that those problems and difficulties can be solved. You need a helping hand? Very well, grasp firmly at this one we hold out to you:

Enter your films for the Intermediate Ten Best Competition.

There will be two classes in this competition which is open only to bona fide amateurs who have not won an

award or commendation in any national competition. They must have no connection in any capacity whatever with the professional film industry and they must not have contributed to the film magazines. Entries for the Intermediate Ten Best must not have been submitted to any other contest, for if the competition comes to be regarded as the repository of lost hopes it could only be a defeatist affair, whereas we want it to be vital and alive—a nursery, not a mortuary. Further, we want to encourage those amateurs who do not normally enter for competitions.

There will be a class for films taken with cameras having fixed focus f/3.5 lenses, and a class for films taken with any other sort of camera. Quite frankly, we do not expect there to be any difference in the quality of the entries in each class, but we do realise that in a competition of this kind it is essential to establish confidence. If you feel that you are at a disadvantage because you have limited equipment, your mistrust is likely to affect your work. You won't be at your best.

In each class we shall select the five best films, each of which will win an award of £5; and a number of films in each class will be selected as 'Highly Commended' or 'Commended', according to merit. We shall not set as high a standard as that of the Ten Best which is, in fact, the highest that can be set, but that does not mean that you are welcome to enter a badly shot, untitled, unedited picture.

The subject, length and gauge we leave to you. We do not like the idea of telling you what to film—much better for you to make your own choice. Nor do we like the idea of classes for this and that—for holiday films, domestic episodes, documentary films and so on—for a film which fails to gain a place in Class A might be a better film than a winner in Class B. Silent films only may be submitted.

But although you may please yourself entirely as to what you film, we would urge you not to strive too much to be 'different.' Don't think: "They see so many holiday films at *A.C.W.* that it's not much use my putting in yet

another one. I'd better try and think up some novel twist, something to disguise it." *Don't*. If you want to make a holiday film, make it—and make it as well as you know how. For heaven's sake what is wrong with holidays as the subject of a film?

"*Inter*" is designed to encourage you to get to grips with technique. We are not concerned with the subject. No one will lose a single mark by entering a holiday or a family film. On the contrary, we hope that there will be far more holiday and family films than any other kind, for isn't it a fact that you bought your camera primarily to make such films? Our aim is to help you to make these films as well as you are able, not to persuade you to embark on something that you have little interest in or taste for. Of course, once you acquire a sufficient degree of skill we hope you may be tempted to turn to other subjects. We expect then that you will turn your attention to the Ten Best which, of course, will continue to be held every year.

Though they will run concurrently, "*Inter*" and Ten Best will close on different dates, for it would be impracticable for us to judge two large competitions at the same time. The Ten Best already attracts three or four times as many entries as any other national amateur film competition, but we hope "*Inter*" will attract very many more. After all, large though the Ten Best entry is it represents a mere fraction of the readership of *A.C.W.* We want the man in the street, the ordinary fellow who films for fun and never thinks of entering for competitions to have a shot at "*Inter*."

He will have plenty of time to get geared up for it, for the closing date will be about the 15th of September each year, beginning with September, 1951. We are sorry we cannot offer you a chance of entering a film this year, but a closing date of 15th September, 1950, would give intending entrants too little time for preparation.

Entry forms will be available in due course; and, in order to help in the arrangement of the judging sessions, we shall in future be issuing entry forms for the Ten Best.



Shots from "Eggs for Breakfast" (left) and "Post Haste" (right), both prizewinning films. "Eggs for Breakfast" is discussed below.

A Holiday Film That Is 'Different'

An analysis of three of the plaque winners in our 1949 Competition. Notes on the other prizewinning films were given in our May and June issues.

It is seldom that the film made on holiday is a real winner. It too often suffers from inadequate preparation and hence imperfect construction, and continuity is usually very patchy. Of course, there are perfectly good reasons for this. It is very difficult to plan a film which recounts casual adventures which have yet to take place in locations you have yet to visit—difficult but not impossible.

"Eggs for Breakfast," by Peter Bowen, is therefore something of a rarity for it is a real winner, being one of the A.C.W. 1949 National Amateur Film Awards. It is a family film, taken on holiday and shot from a detailed script. We don't need the producer's assurance that this was so: there is no doubt at all that practically every shot was taken to plan.

We don't assert that because of this it is a perfect film. It isn't. It takes too long to get to the point and it needs cutting, but it could not have attained the success it achieves without the most careful preparation.

It should perhaps be pointed out that it is not a *typical* holiday film; that is to say, it does not picture typical happy-go-lucky holiday activities—bathing, picnics, car tours and walks, and so on. Instead, Mr. Bowen has invented a plot set against a background he could expect to

find and acted by players he knew how to handle: his wife and two small children. The other sort of holiday film for the most part just has to be shot as opportunity offers. In this kind of holiday film the producer makes his own opportunities and so is able to work according to plan.

We do not suggest that the fictional holiday film is to be commended above all other types of holiday film. It has at least one disadvantage: it is bound to appear unreal to a certain extent. You know that it's all 'made up.' But if it is done well it is very satisfying because it is a coherent whole instead of an assemblage of bits and pieces.

So if you want to produce something a little different from the factual holiday record, why not have a shot at the "Eggs for Breakfast" sort, or, if you do not care to go as far as that, at least include one or two scripted acted sequences. In a later issue Mr. Bowen will explain just how he went about it, but meanwhile here is an outline of the film:

A series of dissolves of Cornish cliff scenery (the film is in Kodachrome)—a tent in a field overlooking the sea—father emerges—breakfast is prepared—some rather heavy-handed gags in which father meets with misadventure



A shot from one of the introductory sequences in "The River is Spanned" illustrating the planning of the Forth Bridge.

and smashes the eggs—small son, at breakfast, notes a seagull's darting flight—an idea occurs to him: he will retrieve the situation (no sub-title: the boy's thoughtful look at the gull and a close-up of the box of smashed eggs are sufficient to establish the idea).

Boy and 3-year old sister wander off—cross-cutting of shots of them making their way to the cliffs and of father and mother washing-up the crockery is put down on a copy of a newspaper which boldly features a story of the cliff rescue of a child who had wandered too far—but the audience spots the story some time before father—mother had previously idly wondered what the children were doing—father settles down to read—looks up, says thoughtfully (sub-title): "Perhaps we had better find the children" (no histrionics, no wild surging of panic—but they get increasingly upset when the children are not to be found).

The children make their hazardous way along precipitous cliffs—occasional shots of the dizzy scene below as supposedly seen by them help to suggest their danger—gulls lay their eggs in horribly inaccessible spots, but the children shuffle on—small girl lags behind, gets frightened, sheds real tears—intertcut with the foregoing are shots of the parents scrambling down to the beach.

The children's legs and arms become scratched and torn (application of lipstick, no doubt)—girl lets fall the doll she had been clutching, becomes too

scared to follow her brother as he edges along inch by inch. (All of these shots are, of course, in close-up or medium close-up to mask the fact that the cliffs the children are scaling are not really hazardous, though a single medium long shot later on in the film does show the boy stuck in a very awkward position.)

Father puts out in a rowing boat and scans the cliffs as he pulls at the oars—girl becomes dizzy—out-of-focus shot of the sea below as she sees it—she falls—lumps of rock hurtle down the cliff face—the boy can neither go on nor return—father jumps ashore—rescues both the children—but the boat has drifted away—ah! but there is mother like Grace Darling to the rescue—as they all return in her boat (the girl having miraculously recovered) father stops rowing, puts his hands in his trouser pockets—and withdraws two gulls' eggs which he presents to son and daughter.

Colour matching is not always as good as it should be, but the editing is extremely ably done, except that the cliff adventures are spun out too long; simple excision will remedy this fault, for the shooting and editing technique is most efficient. And, as we said earlier, the introductory sequences outstay their welcome. The natural acting of father, mother and particularly of the two children is very pleasing and the film as a whole is a pleasure to watch.

We feel, however, that it was a mistake to have allowed it to develop into drama, even though the girl's fall is well staged and there is a happy ending. The audience know that it is all a holiday lark. They are prepared to admit that children do get into mischief ("Find out what Willie's doing and tell him to stop it") and that the small boy and girl of the film might well have courted danger, but the fall, with the crumpled little body lying on a shelf of rock, is not easy to swallow. In our view family holiday films are best left on a light note throughout. In this particular case a lighter touch need not have minimised the element of excitement and suspense, and greater credibility would have been achieved.

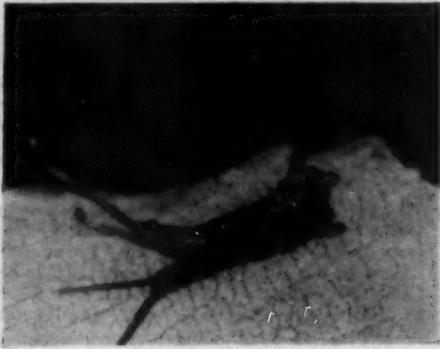
"A Nursing Story," by W. M. Van Essen, F.R.C.S., another of the 1949 National Amateur Film Awards, is also

a lone effort. The producer would appear to be one of those fortunate people to whom film making comes naturally, for apart from a few hundred feet of family shots, this is his first real film. Doubtless he had to work by trial and error like everyone else, but the film gives no evidence of any fumbling. If anything, indeed, it is a little too orderly.

The technique is so clearly correct, shot follows shot just as it should do, everything is right according to well-tried rules. This is not to say that it lacks heart or that the producer is pre-occupied with technique. He has turned out a very good film but to the hypercritical eye it is a film made by a gifted beginner who has a natural talent for film making, who has gone to a great deal of trouble to harness technique in the service of that talent but who lacks the mellowness and assurance that only experience can bring.

The film opens with a man being taken to hospital for an operation for appendicitis. In most amateur films hospital patients invariably look phoney—healthy folk heavily bandaged and trying to look as though they were suffering. Mr. Van Essen's 'patient'—a male nurse—is entirely convincing.

The patient's wife and daughter visit him during his convalescence. On the bed is the newspaper he has been reading, folded to show an advertisement for the nursing service. Daughter glances at it and then to photographs of her mother and herself on his bedside table. Her photograph dissolves to one of her wearing nurse's uniform.



A frame enlargement from "Nature's Way." An account of the making of this film begins on page 242.



In this attractively composed long shot the dwarfing of the figure in relation to the landscape helps to suggest a poignant mood of desolation (from "Nemesis," one of the 1949 Tan Best).

The two ladies rise to go. No sudden resolve is apparent on the girl's part. She does not strike a pose and go starry-eyed. Nothing is said about her becoming a nurse. The patient returns home, is brought tea. As he drinks it he smilingly draws the attention of his companion to the girl seated in the window: she is writing a letter of application to a hospital matron.

Cut to a door bearing the word: *Matron*. The girl enters, is interviewed, is shown her bedroom. Since the film was made with the express purpose of showing to girls of school-leaving age (and their parents) with the object of interesting them in nursing as a career, the author is very properly at pains to show the details of the room she will have as her own. Then follow scenes in the classroom, the common room and the playing field. The girl completes her course and is posted to a hospital. We see her helping to make a bed. A sub-title tells us that she is on the threshold of a great career and asks 'if you, too, would like to be a nurse.'

We should like to have seen a little more of the nurses' training and to have been told something about the conditions of service, but the film does what it sets out to do: leave the audience for which it was designed with a favourable impression of nursing rather than attempt to teach them anything about it. The author tells us that it was made in his spare time between February and May,

1949, that all of those taking part were members of the staff and that none had any previous experience of film making. All concerned are to be congratulated on their work.

"The River is Spanned," a sound film by Harry Birrell, also among the 1949 Ten Best, suffers from the fact that, to a certain extent, the producer has had to make bricks without straw. He seeks to show the building of a famous bridge (the Forth) which was in fact erected long before the arrival of the cinema. But the difficulties of the production, far from being a deterrent, proved a stimulus.

There is no existent film record of its erection. Very well, it must be invented. So he has taken a number of still photographs and shot them (in a manner which he will later describe in *A.C.W.*) so that parts of the actual living scene are superimposed in background or

foreground, this giving the movement which the photographs lack.

And he has taken shots of workmen engaged in laying a railway line on the bridge with the idea of suggesting that they are actually working on the bridge structure. The idea does not entirely get home (for one thing the men wear the clothes of to-day and are noticeably free from whiskers) but the shots help to build up the desired effect. We are not shown any of the mechanical details of construction, but as an impression, conveying an idea of the vastness of the plan, the film is an effective and ingenious study; and the commentary and musical score are sensible and restrained.

(Next Month : Notes on the Highly Commended and Commendable Films.)

First Performance

LARGE, tastefully designed display boards in the foyer, a stage banked with flowers, a centre-piece, revealed for a few seconds as the curtains parted, heralds the *A.C.W.* films, then on the stroke of eight the screen curtains part and the first performance of the 1949 Ten Best begins. The Fourfold Film Society, who presented the films on June 1st, 2nd and 3rd, reached a level of showmanship, smooth, restrained and neatly timed, which could only have been attained by meticulous planning. Even the colour scheme was so arranged that it echoed the colours of the *A.C.W.* posters and programmes.

Through the courtesy of G.B. Equipments, Ltd., who were most helpful throughout, a Bell & Howell-Gaumont arc projector was used. It gave a brilliantly lit picture, the colour films in particular having remarkable punch and clarity. The 10-ft. screen had been specially prepared by Fourfold with a light blue coating.

For the extract from "Nature's Way" the society recorded a commentary written by the producer, using a Wirek recorder generously made available for the purpose by Wirek, Ltd. Here again the quality reached a high standard.

At the first performance we attended (at the time of writing the others have yet to take place) the films were well received by a large audience. "A better programme than last year" was one of the confidently delivered verdicts we could not help overhearing. Will that be your opinion when the films come your way? We should like to know. A behind-the-scenes illustrated report on the shows will appear in next month's *A.C.W.*



The schoolmaster retires to bed to mark exercises (from "The Beginning," 1949 plaque winner).



A shot from "A Nursing Story," features of which are outlined in these pages.

A LITTLE MORE CO-OPERATION, PLEASE!

WALTER LASSALLY pleads for a closer understanding between amateur cine and film societies.

Cine societies and film societies are usually thought of by the layman as being one and the same thing. Unfortunately, this is only rarely the case. More often they seem to ape their professional counterparts, production and exhibition, by co-operating as little as possible with each other, if not actually being at loggerheads.

The cine society often consists of a number of individuals with their own cameras and equipment who are interested in cine-photography and who gather regularly to swap ideas and experiences and to make an occasional film together as a team. The film societies, on the other hand, usually comprise lay people who are interested in seeing and discussing good professional films.

It would seem quite apparent, then, that both types of society could derive much mutual benefit from co-operating as much as possible, but an investigation of the actual situation would reveal that only a handful of societies engage in both film making and film appreciation activities while very few separate societies co-operate with each other towards their common aim, that of learning more about films.

One reason for this curious state of affairs may be found in the different origins of the two types of society, which have traversed no common road in the past. In general, the cine societies grew out of the photographic society movement, and to this very day the old controversy about cine societies being "too pre-occupied with the photographic side of film making to the neglect of its other facets" is still going strong. The film society movement, however, started independently with a

few isolated societies in the larger towns such as London, Glasgow and Edinburgh and later expanded rapidly with the assistance of the British Film Institute and other cultural organisations.

Probably only the more advanced and enthusiastic members of the film societies have ever thought about making films on their own, while the interests of many cine society members seem to go no further than discussing gadgets and comparing each other's family films.

One member of a local cine society summed up this article thus: "What do I want to see a lot of old silent films for? I'd be bored stiff. I'm only interested in improving my own family films and swapping experiences and new ideas with others who have similar interests. My fellow members seem to think likewise—seeing old silent films wouldn't help any of us."

It is sincerely to be hoped that the interests of a good many cine society members are not confined to "baby-on-the-lawn-films", as seems to be the case with the above society. Not that there is anything wrong with "baby-on-the-lawn-films"; no one would begrudge the proud parents the right, and the pleasure, of making a record of their offspring's progress. Indeed, some of these records have, in the past, proved most entertaining, appealing to audiences not even remotely related to the maker's family.

This type of film, however, ought not to become the be-all and end-all of cine society activities. Most societies turn out story films or documentaries of one sort or another, and it is in improving these that visits to the local film society

(Continued on page 269)



WHAT A SCARE !

ANOTHER COMEDY IN OUR SERIES OF SCRIPTS FOR FILMING

By OSWELL BLAKESTON

This little film is planned so that any number of holiday friends can be given parts. There need really be no limit to the number of scarecrow actors in this picture !

Further, the subject offers an opportunity to "let go" with fantastic make-up and bizarre old clothing. The scarecrows can wear and look like—anything. Now there are many would-be film artists who feel less self-conscious when they have made themselves "unrecognisable"; and the director can console himself with the thought that if his artistes do overdo it a bit, they are still in character !

So let us hope this picture will give a good time to all—including the audiences who finally see it !

WHAT A SCARE !

Scene 1. *Fade in.* Long shot in a field. A band of grotesque scarecrows are dancing in a ring.

2. A medium shot of the dance. The scarecrows take an attitude, hold it, then dance on a few steps, then strike another attitude, and so on. (It would be as well to break up this shot with number of close-ups of scarecrows which can be cut into the master shot in the final editing.)

3. A medium-long shot of the dance. All the scarecrows are now facing outwards,

away from the centre of the ring. One walks into the centre. He claps his hands on high, and the others spin round to face him. He gestures with his hands, and the others sit on the ground at his feet.

4. A close shot of the head scarecrow, in the centre of the circle. With violent grimaces, he is mouthing a speech :

TITLE : "*Sisters and brothers ! We are losing caste !*"

5. A series of close shots of scarecrows, taken in twos and threes, nodding agreement.

6. Same as 4. The boss scarecrow is explaining the situation.

TITLE : "*The farmers are trying to make us—respectable !*"

7. A medium shot of the meeting. All the scarecrows get up and wave their indignation.

8. A close-up of the boss scarecrow, calling the meeting to order.

9. Same as 7. The scarecrows subside, and sit down again.

10. A close shot of the boss, who has resumed his speech :

TITLE : "*We must strike . . .*"
The pantomime speech is becoming frantic . . .

TITLE : ". . . for LOWER wages !"
11. A medium shot of the circle. All the scarecrows leap up and applaud. Then they resume their dance. This time the boss dances in the centre of the ring by himself. (It would be best to take this dance from several angles. Sometimes the

camera could be pointing into the ring, with the outside dancers whirling past the lens ; sometimes it could be pointing out of the ring, as if from the viewpoint of the boss. Anyway, if the dance is made into a little sequence, it will offer an easy chance for some "rhythmic" editing : shots, in the sequence of dance shots, getting shorter and shorter as the dancers spin into delirium.)

12. A medium-close shot of the boss, who speaks between hopping dance movements. (The two following titles should be cut into this shot at appropriate places).

TITLE: "We must bewitch the farmers . . ."

TITLE: ". . . until they agree to pay us LESS!"

13. A medium-long shot of the scarecrows dancing a positive saturnalia of approval. *Fade out.*

14. *Fade in.* A medium-long shot of an idyllic farmhouse.

15. A close shot of the farmhouse. A cat comes padding out of the front door.

16. A medium-close shot of a scarecrow, the camera shooting from a low angle inside the garden around the farmhouse. (Perhaps the scarecrow stands on a packing-case, hidden by the wall, to make him look absurdly tall.) He is peeping over the garden wall, and we know he is watching the cat.

17. A close-up of the cat, walking towards camera.

18. Same as 16. The scarecrow stretches up to his full height and makes magic passes.

19. Same as 15. But now the "hypnotised" cat runs rapidly *backwards* into the farmhouse. (The cameraman takes a shot of the cat running out of the house—with his camera held upside down. Later, in the edited film, this shot is reversed, end for end, in the spliced reel.)

20. A close-up of the scarecrow, who has worked the magic, laughing maliciously.

21. A medium shot of a farmhand, with his back to camera, carrying a couple of buckets of water across the farmyard.

22. A medium-close shot of a scarecrow looking round the corner of a cow-stall. He ventures out from the shelter of the wall, and makes some exaggerated hypnotic passes.

23. Same as 21. The farmhand becomes rigid. He drops his buckets. Then he marches out of the picture like a robot or a zombie. (We realise that he is in a trance, under the magnetic power of the scarecrow.)

24. A medium shot of the duck pond. The farmhand marches into the picture, and walks, with his mechanical gait, into the water until it laps up round his knees. Then he stands as rigid as a statue.

25. A close-up of the scarecrow, who has worked this trick, cackling fiendishly.

26. Same as 24. The bewitched farmhand standing in the water. (We appreciate, now, that he is going to stand there as long as the spell binds him !)

27. A medium shot of another farmhand lifting some straw on a pitchfork.

28. A slightly longer shot, taken from another angle, showing that a scarecrow is standing behind the man with a pitchfork. The scarecrow makes mesmeric passes, and the man with a pitchfork freezes. (The actor can choose a position which is easy to hold, balancing himself with the pitchfork.)

29. A closer shot of the man with pitchfork frozen into immobility.

30. A close-up of the scarecrow and his diabolical laugh.

31. A medium-long shot of labourers hoeing in a field.

32. A closer shot, from another angle, of the men hoeing.

33. A close shot of scarecrows (as many as there are men hoeing) sitting on a gate and making magic passes.

34. Same as 32. The farmhands at work. Suddenly—they vanish. (The cameraman stops his camera ; the labourers run out of the picture ; then the cameraman films the empty field. It is necessary to use a tripod for this shot so that the camera is not shifted.)

35. A close shot of the scarecrows sitting on the gate, laughing like demons.

36. A close shot of a couple of spades leaning against a wall. They vanish. (Same technique as in 34.)

37. A close shot of a hay-rake propped against a fence. It vanishes.

38. A close shot of a milk-churn. It vanishes.

39. A close shot of a pair of gum-boots standing outside the kitchen door. They vanish.

40. A series of close-ups of scarecrows laughing insanely. (We get the feeling that there is no end to the magic pranks which have been played and are amusing the scarecrows.)

41. A medium shot of the farmhouse. The farmer bursts out of the front door and races down the garden path.

42. A medium shot of a scarecrow peering round the corner of a barn. The farmer tears into the picture and makes a grab at the scarecrow, who jumps back out of sight. The farmer spins round in a daze, as if he can no longer see the scarecrow.

43. A medium shot of a scarecrow peering round the corner of a haystack. The scarecrow is beckoning, provocatively.

The farmer lumbers into the picture and makes a dive for the scarecrow. All he gets is an armful of hay. He shakes out the hay, and then sticks some of it in his own hair. (The poor man is breaking up.)

44. A close shot of the boss scarecrow in a field, with his hands cupped round his mouth. He is calling to the farmer.

45. Same as 43. The farmer looks up, frantically, as he hears the shout. He puts a hand to his ear and turns round, foolishly, trying to get the direction of the shout. Then he plods off out of the picture.

46. A medium-long shot of the boss scarecrow in the field. The farmer is running towards him.

47. A medium-close shot of the farmer running towards the camera.

48. A close shot of the farmer, panting. He shouts :

TITLE : "Are you damned scarecrows trying to ruin me?"

49. A close shot of the head scarecrow. This is his hour of triumph.

50. A close-up of the farmer, with a silhouette of the boss scarecrow's shoulder in the foreground. The farmer says :

TITLE : "What the devil's wrong? Aren't I paying you all a living wage?"

51. A close-up of the head scarecrow, with a silhouette of the farmer's shoulder in the foreground. (Now it's as if we were looking over the farmer's shoulder at the head scarecrow.) The scarecrow says :

TITLE : "We demand — half pay."

52. A close shot of the farmer facing the scarecrow, both with their profiles to the camera. The scarecrow is making his demand. The farmer looks astonished. Then he roars with laughter, slaps his knee, almost doubles up, etc.

53. A large close-up of the farmer, laughing.

54. A large close-up of the head scarecrow, scowling at the farmer's levity.

55. A medium-close shot of the other scarecrows advancing to camera, shaking their fists. (We get the feeling they have materialised out of the air.)

56. A medium shot with the farmer, back to camera in the foreground, facing all the scarecrows.

57. A close shot of the farmer, trying to pull himself together. He says :

TITLE : "Gentlemen, I am perfectly ready to give you, per week — absolutely nothing!"

58. Same as 56. The scarecrows take off their strange headgear and wave it in the air in delight.

59. A close-up of the head scarecrow, overwhelmed by his triumph. He says :

TITLE : "Now . . . we're real scarecrows again!"

60. A series of close-ups of scarecrows waving for victory!

61. A medium shot of the scarecrows dancing round the farmer, who is scratching his head. Then each scarecrow in turn breaks from the dance, shakes hands with the farmer and rushes out of picture. The boss scarecrow is the last to shake hands.

62. Same as 52. The head scarecrow points out of picture. He says :

TITLE : "And now we're all going back to work!"

63. A long shot down a country lane. The scarecrows dashing off to get back to their fields and their jobs.

64. A series of shots of fields in which *real* scarecrows suddenly appear. (The cameraman uses the same technique as in making things vanish. He stops the camera ; the scarecrow is put in position ; the camera starts turning again.)

65. A close shot of the farmer in a field, grinning down at a *real* scarecrow. Then he gives it a mighty wallop on the cheek, turns on his heel, and strides out of the picture.

Fade out.

THE END.

(Alternatively, some directors might like to end this picture with an epilogue. After a title (*And that night there was another scarecrow dance to celebrate the VICTORY!*), one could show various shots of scarecrows dancing, this time with even more abandon than before. All these shots could be taken with a filter on the camera lens to give a moonlight effect.)



Scripts for films ranging from family charades to thrillers, from fantasy-drama to the film equivalent of the tone poem, are all lined up for publication in forthcoming issues. Three of them make use of recorded commentaries.

Next month: Ideas for holiday films.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW?

The second in an original series of articles (the first appeared last month) designed for the cineman who likes to find things out for himself. By JULIEN CAUNTER

Even with all the enthusiasm in the world it is extremely unlikely that we shall ever invent any new principle in photography. So let us keep our sense of proportion and realise that what we *shall* be doing is thinking out new combinations and uses of *already known facts*. It is like building a house : we use the same bricks as anyone else but we can build up whatever kind of structure that we fancy. Therefore, in our experiments with chemistry, all we want is a vast number of facts and we can start our ideas going.

Yes, all we want at our finger tips is Photographic Chemistry. Did someone turn pale ? Many are overawed by chemistry, thinking of it as a huge, involved, unmanageable subject with such a mass of "known" facts that it takes years at school to absorb anything like a good helping. If you think about it like that too much you will frighten yourself from the start. Be calm. Do as I did ; learn as you go, merely as much as you need for the moment.

If you cannot keep your information in your head, then keep it somewhere where you can easily get at it—on your bookshelf ! Books are the finest substitute for a practical course of education. Naturally, the more you can remember of what you learned at school, the easier it will be, but the best of teaching yourself is that you learn just as much as you want to learn and cut out the cramming of unwanted lumber.

One's first impulse is to get one of the huge volumes supposed to contain everything on photographic chemistry. This is not a good idea for us because such tomes are inclined to deal with the subject in a scientific rather than a homely, readable fashion. A better

system is to acquire, preferably honestly so that you can keep them by you, a selection of separate books that are more likely to contain information given in a "friendly" way. Many of the pre-war books mentioned in reference lists are now out of print but there are enough in the shops these days to serve our purpose.

With a comprehensive collection of such books you will have before you a mass of facts which may tend to put you off as soon as you look at them. But let me point out, as an example, that it is not necessary to understand even such a simple formula as :



True, it is very nice if you *are* on speaking terms, for in some ways life is thus made easier ; but it is only a refinement, a chemical shorthand, and you can do without it. Later on, perhaps . . . And as for such items as pH values and being able to explain exactly what a base is—forget them. Such things will probably come easily to you in time, but, if not, it doesn't really matter.

The kind of facts that we welcome are simple statements of chemical reactions and properties of various elements and compounds. An example would be the translation of the above formula, which is that when potassium bromide is added to silver nitrate (it is implied that one or both are dissolved in water) they change and form two new substances, silver bromide and potassium nitrate. A further fact, as an example of what you would have to look into if it were important, is that potassium nitrate is soluble in water and silver bromide is not, so a precipitate of silver bromide is formed.

Only patience is required to find such plain, usable references. You see, it is

not necessary that we start off by being expert. We can get our fun and results while trying to *become* expert, building up our knowledge by searching and testing until in the end we know what we are talking about. It is even more fun if two of you can work together, either co-operating or using a little healthy rivalry.

There is great satisfaction in being an expert. People come along and ask you things and you have the privilege of being regarded as an authority (I nearly said curiosity). But that is looking a long way ahead ; we have only reached the stage of considering books. Fundamentally what we are after is a general chemistry background—we need a picture in our minds of what is happening when we do things to a photographic emulsion, when we expose it to light, de-sensitise, develop, fix, harden, reduce, intensify, bleach, colour-develop, remove stains, etc. Our books will tell us, and although they explain only existing processes and techniques we must study these fascinating accounts as much as we can before going on to think out variations, because they are the supply bases for our experimental expeditions. This chapter sets out to specify sources of information : *how to use them* will be shown in later articles.

There are five companions of mine who taught me a great deal of what I have managed to learn. Let me introduce them.

Developing. By C. I. Jacobson. Focal Press. 10s. 6d.

This book deals with all the usual things that happen to a negative and tells of them in straightforward fashion so that, supported by the many illustrations, they can be absorbed almost painlessly. Generally speaking the object of the book, as truthfully stated on the jacket, is to convince you that the darkroom is not the scene of secret witchcraft some people try to make out. Down-to-earth information is provided which is essential for our experimenting. There are 200 formulae and tables.

Photographic Chemicals and Chemistry. By Southworth and Bentley. Pitman, 7s. 6d.

This is the book to give you, in

addition to a good general talk on chemicals, a valuable all-round picture of what goes on in the emulsion, as far as science can tell, during the usual processes. The treatment is in a more scientific-laboratory style than "Developing" but it is still readable for it assumes little acquaintance with chemistry. What it does not do is to give developer formulae ; but it provides a comprehensive list of photographic chemicals and their important properties and uses. We shall be referring to that list often.

Photographic Chemicals and their Uses. By W. F. F. Shearcroft. Fountain Press, 6s.

This book is handy for a number of points of routine like making up solutions and storing chemicals. Its treatment, however, is definitely that of the scientific laboratory and thus, from our point of view, over-emphasises such things as being "correct" in procedure. It is very nice, I agree, to be really accurate in our work, especially when the occasion demands it, but it is better to keep a sensible balance between not-being-critical-enough and being hyper-critical. There will be more to say about this in a later article.

The British Journal Photographic Almanac. An annual. H. Greenwood & Co. Ltd. The 1949 edition with stiff cardboard covers cost 5s.

This is an excellent publication, although a mixed blessing. It is certainly worth buying once. I mention once for there is a strong temptation to buy a new one every year. The book contains many sections. To name only two : a large one of formulae and tables ; and the section that appeals most to the experimenter — Epitome of Progress which describes the latest ideas and inventions that have been disclosed during the preceding year. The uneconomic disadvantage of the Almanac is that, to get a fresh Epitome of Progress each year, one has to buy the whole book.

Wall's Dictionary of Photography. Iliffe & Sons Ltd. 15s.

Thinking, as we did in Part 1, of "capturing the spirit of the early pioneers," a suitable book to take one back to those days, while still remaining



What's this? It says here that if I make up a solution of . . . Ah, this may be what we are looking for!

There are other sources of information. Before the war one could collect plenty of catalogues and other booklets and learn a lot but nowadays there is not so much scope there. The trade booklets that are available are listed in the B. J. Almanac under "Text Books and Trade Booklets."

It is a great help if you have any friends who take in such a Journal as the B.K.S. (British Kinematograph Society) or the S.M.P.E. (Society of Motion Picture Engineers). Occasionally some of the American publications may come your way. With luck you will be able to see odd numbers of the British Journal of Photography, or if you feel equal to it you can buy it every week and enjoy fourpence worth of advanced amateur reading.

We want the facts *behind* what the normal amateur sees, one stage more scientific than is given in popular photography books. Once you have become interested in acquiring such information you will find it in all kinds of places—even in the dentist's waiting room. Never be afraid of learning too much. As time goes on, the pleasure from your hobby will increase enormously. To be happy can be described as "not having time to think about being miserable." That will apply to you.

The next article in this series will deal with your home laboratory and how you can set about equipping it with the apparatus you will need at a very low cost.

The range of apparatus is not extensive and while some necessities, costing a few shillings, must be bought much can be made at home. The author will describe how he made his own chemical balance and will suggest how you, too, can acquire one cheaply.

modern, is the "Dictionary of Photography," the most expensive book I dare recommend. It is a reference book so full of interesting facts that every time one looks into it to find something one will read a dozen things before reaching the required item—if one can remember what it was. It is not complete—no book ever is—but there is something in it for everyone.

Well, those are my Big Five. The information overlaps in them all, of course, yet it is surprising how different it looks in each case. The beauty of our study is that we need not *learn* all we read—just knowing where to find the facts when we want them is enough. But in our research (let us be superior and call it that) we shall find sometimes that even after we have read everything, we shall still not know. What then?

Our second line of attack is to write somewhere. We can write to big manufacturers but they may not be quite as obliging as we could hope, since, understandably enough, they are mainly interested in their own product. We need an unbiased service. Readers of A.C.W.'s still photography companion, "*Miniature Camera World*" will know of the free service available; and, of course, if the queries deal with cinematography rather than with pure photography, I cannot recommend anything better than our own *A.C.W.*

FILMING BIG CLOSE-UPS

RUNNING COMMENTARY By SOUND TRACK

In many a film, there are occasions when one wants to show in a detail close-up, objects in the size range of oranges—size of picture around 3 ins. wide.

Our method of getting a good picture at such close range is to use the wire frame finder in a form clipped to the lens. It is just like a skeleton effects box, and very easy to make. Fig. 1 shows the arrangement; Fig. 2 shows an alternative, preferred by some users and essential if clipping on to the lens is

for any reason impossible. A supplementary lens, bi-convex type and of focal length equal to the distance from the front of the camera lens to the wire frame, is needed. The set-up of Fig. 2 is practically identical with the small titlers made by Kodak, Pathé and others, but now almost entirely superseded by titlers with 9" by 7" cards. Anyone possessing these small titlers has only to clear the picture area, which in most models has a solid backing, and there is a frame finder ready-made.

The wire frame having been lined-up by eye in what seems to be the central position, a few test frames at small aperture should be made to ensure that the wire does not encroach into the picture area. If O.K., the apparatus is ready for use. If not, bend slightly and re-test.

In use, the object being photographed is merely posed in the frame aperture, and one knows it is lined up and in focus. There are really only two particular precautions to note: first, the

5. For panning shots, in addition to a rehearsal, preferably timed, with your eye at the viewfinder, do one more rehearsal watching the camera. If there is jerkiness it will then be apparent. Perhaps the pan head is running roughly. If it cannot be put right on location, then *far, far* better not to pan at all.

6. If despite all efforts a valuable shot runs right up to the end of the reel, then (a) unload the camera in the dark and also (b) put a rubber band round the film on the spool before placing in its tin. Lastly (c) a polite note to the processing station, and they will reduce handling fogging to a minimum. This, of course, applies only to spool-loading cameras.

Very occasionally one also opens a reel only to find it has worked loose and hence a few coils bulge over the spool cheeks. This means that fogging will show on the first few feet of the processed film. Where

10 TIPS FOR CAMERAMEN

Having been at this filming game for so long, we have vaguely realised how essentially repetitive life must always be. None of these ten useful tips to cinematographers is original but the majority are sure to be new to many cameramen . . .

1. Carry a one-inch long hexagon head quarter-inch Whitworth bolt attached to five feet of cord, when a tripod is "impossible." The bolt screws into the camera, the string goes under the right heel and when pulled taut is an amazing improvement to camera steadiness.

2. If filters are in use for a few shots only of a sequence, put a reminder mark on the front glass of the viewfinder. A blob of ink will serve, or a minute triangle of adhesive tape.

3. If you carry and use a lens cap, which we consider redundant except near the sea, attach it by a cord in such a way that when it is on the lens the cord crosses the viewfinder.

4. Carry a piece of matt black card, two inches square. With the edge of this you can make wipes in and out in any direction, and this assists all films, however vaguely you intend to edit them. Likely ending shots are wiped out and the worst that can happen is to lose the 12 frames or so carrying the wipe if they do not go at the end after all.

depth of focus is very small, so you must be sure that the important part of the subject is in the plane of the frame. Second, the proximity of the camera, and yourself, the operator, to the subject restricts the light falling upon the subject, so that exposure meter readings must be taken when you are in the filming position. If no meter is available, open up about one stop for such shots as compared with the comparative medium close-up setting.

With an 8" focal length supplementary lens, and the wire frame 8" from front of camera lens, the frame should be $3\frac{1}{4}'' \times 2\frac{1}{2}''$ in the cases of 16mm. cameras with 1" lenses and 9.5mm. cameras with 20mm. lenses; and $3'' \times 2\frac{1}{2}''$ for 8mm. cameras with $\frac{1}{2}$ " lenses. In practice, however, since these are "skin-tight" sizes, we prefer to add a quarter of an inch all round. Centring seldom matters to within half an inch. Crisp, perfect focus, however, is absolutely essential, and this the frame readily provides.

Try it on a soap bubble, or a floating toy duck, or a "snowstorm", or a girl-friend muttering "*stewed prunes*". Avoid using it on a heap of cigarette-ends in an ashtray. Finally, remember that such shots must not be too proudly aloof. Do not, generally, cut them adjacent to long shots. Usually they best follow a medium close-up. And they are so

the job is of top importance and on location, it is worth going through the batch of films you take with you in the dark before starting out, to ensure that all your films are wound tight. This can be felt without breaking their securing band.

7. Save film—and, if you do little editing, improve the tempo of your results—by getting to know accurately the number of seconds needed for routine shots such as signposts, famous monuments, reaction close-ups, and so on.

8. When using a complicated camera get a precise drill to ensure that all is correctly set for each shot. Restrain impulsive shooting.

9. Conversely, remember that you are only human and adopt the *Red Dot* technique. By this we mean leaving everything set to the average conditions prevailing for the par-

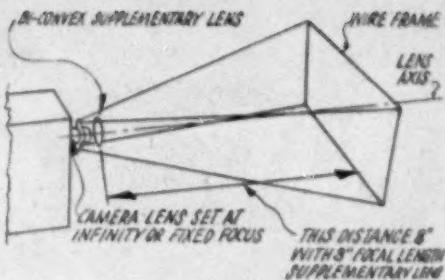


Fig. 1.

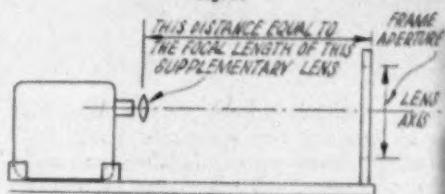


Fig. 2.

explicit that their screen time is normally very short—around two to three seconds if static, a little longer when in movement. There is nothing odd or unexpected or highbrow about them: they are an accepted and vital attribute of the closely-peering "kino-eye".

16mm. STILL PHOTOGRAPHY

An insidious idea that keeps getting revived is the (sweet little) camera that takes pictures on 16mm. film. The Germans perpetrated them. You could get them at the chain stores before the

ticular occasion. Suppose it is a sports meeting, bright sun, pan film of speed 27° log scale. Then you leave all the lenses set at 20 ft. focus and f/11: the one inch lens in the taking position: viewfinder parallax set at infinity: speed at 16 frames per sec.: mechanism to "trigger." Then a shot taken on sudden impulse is practically certain to be satisfactory.

10. Get to realise really clearly the two most notorious sources of disappointment: the distant scenes on grey days which are just hopeless, and the family-in-garden shots on monochrome with the noonday sun behind the camera . . . these need the sun at right angles to sort out the planes of identical greens, and you *always* score by not filming within two hours of (real) noon. The sun is too vertical.

Thank you, gentlemen. Now we feel even older!



Preparing to film a travelling car shot for "Seeing's Believing" (9.5mm.) by Wulfrun A.C.C. The car remains stationary, but branches pass by it, carried by two of the crew, while a third member rocks it energetically.

war. Only last week we saw one, with a 1" lens and two apertures, about f/6.3 and f/9, instantaneous (1/25th) and bulb, frame finder. Took about 16 pictures on a tiny roll of 16mm. stock. Presumably the processing included prints about 2" square.

Now we read of another from America, such as described above but magazine loading, price \$5. Shutter speed 1/50 sec.

The real horror about these things is that the film size being so small only in the hands of a near-expert will good pictures result. They offer no saving in first cost or in running. We would bet that they are mostly whim-purchased, and that their first roll of film is also their last. It takes a good still man to use a Leica : at the thought of this film size he would quite justifiably pass out.

THE AMATEUR IN THE GARDEN

However much one may loathe gardening, and with however good reason, one's duty is to purvey those images likely to fascinate and enthrall the audience. Prominent amongst such images are class flowers. Any ass can go out and film these, using meter to set exposure and tape measure to set focus, and breathing heavily the while. An obliging bee may even come droning round, in which case everyone will compliment the photographer most enthusiastically. But to add a little real distinction to these flower close-ups, for which, by the way, a frame finder helps a lot, employ some or all of these three techniques :

(1) Fix up a matt black background. This almost always enhances the flower picture, the exceptions being the case of an existing dark background lacking any distracting features, and such specials as cherry blossom against a peerless blue sky. Any matt black cloth secured to a card about 15 by 12 inches is ideal.

(2) Use a mirror, about 8 by 6 inches, to reflect the sunlight (which is almost essential for these shots) in such a way that a degree of back or $\frac{1}{4}$ -back lighting is secured. This will show up the translucent nature of most flower petals, and enhance some of the most delicate tones. Alternatively, of course, the sun might provide the $\frac{1}{4}$ -back lighting (take care that the black background casts no shadow !), in which case the mirror will lighten up the front or side of the flower. The mirror, a second source of strong light, permits unlimited variety in choice of lighting.

(3) Apply a delicate dew, as is sometimes done at flower shows, by a very fine spray of water through a scent spray. Some preliminary work is advisable : in general, after applying the mist-like spray for a few moments, a gentle tap on the flower stalk will cause some of the water particles to run together into dewdrops, a pleasant effect.

There is nothing in any way peculiar about these three adjuncts to quality photography of flowers. They will simply lift your shots the necessary head-and-shoulders above similar shots that lack such refinements. So it pays to go to a little trouble over them if you can call it "trouble."

IDEAS exchanged here

"THE CORRESPONDENCE PAGES ARE THE FIRST THING I TURN to when I open my copy of A.C.W. There's always something interesting, helpful, amusing or provocative to read." We are sure the writer of the above echoes the opinion of many other readers, so this month we are devoting even more space than usual to your own views and news. Letters for publication are always welcome. Address : "Amateur Cine World," 24, Store Street, London, W.C.I.

8mm., 9.5mm. or 16mm.?

'DEPENDS ON YOUR STANDARDS'

Sir.—Messrs. L. A. Fountain and H. H. Standen (May issue) criticise the comment on 8mm. film made by Mr. Colquhoun (March). I am somewhat surprised at the naivety of all three gentlemen. They should realise that the quality of a projected picture is satisfactory or otherwise depending largely on the standards which the individual has adopted for his general use.

I myself started with 8mm. film and a 200 watt lamp, and at that time I know I was extremely pleased with results. The far better definition of 16mm. Kodachrome compared with 8mm., however, made me change over, and after some years' experience with 16mm. film and a 750 watt lamp, I now find 8mm. film quite intolerable. Nevertheless, I would not for a moment dispute that other people may find 8mm. film perfectly satisfactory, and it does not seem to be a matter that need be argued about at all. It is simply the fundamental fact that what suits one person does not necessarily suit another, owing to individual circumstances.

STOKE BISHOP,
BRISTOL, 9.

JACK KNAPMAN.

. . . AND INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

Sir.—The relative merits of the different film sizes are a personal matter, but, in the not-so-distant days when I took up the hobby, I found the advice of the 8mm. enthusiasts most misleading, and my reasoning may be of value to other beginners.

A *must* for me was an f/1.9 interchangeable lens, with variable speeds. This I could get in 9.5mm. for £35 odd, whereas the camera I liked in 8mm. was another £20 more. The lower cost of 8mm. film seemed to be attractive but, averaging 120 feet a month, the saving was only a matter of shillings. On film-stock, 8mm. has an advantage, but 9.5mm. is adequately catered for, particularly with the new Pathé film for artificial light.

Colour is an important subject on which I hold strong views. Colour film bears no

relationship to true colouring, and its only legitimate use is for "mood" effect, comparable to that obtained by lighting on the legitimate stage. For scenic work it is horrible. While I would like it, it does not outweigh the advantage of lower over-all cost of 9.5mm.

Turning to projectors, there seems little to choose between the two sizes for the presentation of one's own films. When one turns to the libraries, 9.5mm. wins hands down. One can aspire to sound, and most projectors are easily convertible to dual 9.5/16mm.—and there is a wide range of professional films in both sizes.

To sum up: 16mm. is the ideal for those who can afford it, 8mm. is the size for the enthusiast who is going to shoot several thousand feet a year, and/or for whom colour is a *must*; 9.5mm. is for the average man who wants to get the best all-round entertainment value from his equipment and outlay.

TORQUAY. N. INNES POCOCK (LT.-COL.)

8mm. LIGHT OUTPUT

Sir.—It is good to see Messrs. Fountain and Standen rushing into print in the May issue to defend 8mm. from Mr. Colquhoun's charge that it "needs a 500 watt lamp in order to project a picture 3ft. wide." But the facts are, I am afraid, on Mr. Colquhoun's side. For example, in the A.C.W. test of the Bell-Howell 400 watt 8mm. projector (p. 1093, April issue), the report quotes a measured screen illumination of $4\frac{1}{2}$ foot candles on a 3ft. wide screen, and adds the tribute that this is "about 35% higher than comparable machines with 500 watt lamps."

Even $4\frac{1}{2}$ foot candles is a long way below the standard we have learned to expect in the professional cinema. The average suburban or provincial theatre gives us 10 to 15 foot lamberts (which, on a matt white screen of 70% reflectivity, means 14 to 20 foot candles), and some of the better class London cinemas as much as 25 foot lamberts. I would suggest that a screen brightness of

at least 10 foot lamberts is required for proper appreciation of Kodachrome.
RICKMANSWORTH. FRANCIS E. WILLIAMS.

COUNTER BLAST

Sir.—One paragraph in Mr. L. A. Fountain's "8mm. Broadside" (May) really amazed me. He says: "For the last three years I have used 8mm. Kodachrome (daylight and artificial light) exclusively, shooting about 1,000ft. per year." 1,000ft. per year, mind you! Wherever does he get it from?

Perhaps he would be interested in my experience. I can honestly say that I have not bought a reel of 8mm. Kodachrome over the counter in a normal manner since the early years of the war. The usual answer to my enquiry is a shake of the head and a pitying smile as if to say: "Poor fellow, fancy not knowing any better!"

I realise that the dealers get their regular small quota but somehow I am not a favoured customer. Of four dealers who made a note of my address, promising to notify me when they receive any Kodachrome, only one obliged. I was duly grateful for three reels during the last two years.

A friend who saw amateur colour films for the first time about two years ago was so impressed that he bought an 8mm. outfit. However, owing to the impossibility of obtaining Kodachrome—like myself he is not interested in black and white—he is now a very disappointed man and is talking of 'selling up' and going in for television.

RADFORD, NOTTS. C. E. SMEDLEY.

AMONG THOSE ABSENT . . .

Sir.—I am surprised to see the enormous proportion of 16mm. winners and runners-up in the 1949 competition and the almost entire absence of 8mm. and 9.5mm. films (16mm.: 57, 9.5mm.: 5, 8mm.: 5). Nearly every cine enthusiast with whom I am acquainted has noticed this with dissatisfaction. I feel, as do many others, that unless one has unlimited funds, a 16mm. camera and is preferably a member of the Fourfold F.S., there is little, if any, chance of obtaining a place in the first fifty 'best' films of the year.

Am I wasting my time making an 8mm. or 9.5mm. film for next year's competition? My colleagues and I would be pleased to see a detailed explanation in next month's A.C.W. in the hope that other 8mm. and 9.5mm. enthusiasts will not be deterred from entering and feel as discouraged as we are ourselves.

ERITH, KENT. ALAN J. WOOTTON.

As pointed out in our April issue, 9.5mm. and 8mm. represented only 8% and 6.5% respectively of the total entry, and it is therefore not surprising that there should be so few films in these gauges among the runners-up. If our correspondent and every other reader who may feel discouraged had themselves helped to swell the 9.5mm. and 8mm. entry by submitting a film they would have had less to have felt despondent about. For our part we should be very glad indeed were there more prizewinning films in these gauges if only for the fact that we should not then have continually to reaffirm that we are not biased in favour of 16mm.

But we do understand how disappointing it must be for 8mm. and 9.5mm. users always to be left out in the cold. If, however, they make no move to get out of it they cannot fairly blame us because the wind blows chill. All the time they are content to believe that 16mm. is the only gauge for national competitions; it will in fact remain virtually the only gauge. So let's see what you can do this year, 8mm. and 9.5mm. fans! There have been 8mm. and 9.5mm. films among previous Ten Best winners—very good films, too—so it can be done. And 8mm. users can take heart from the fact that this gauge represented the major part of the entry for the 1949 American Ten Best, the best film of 16mm.

Colour

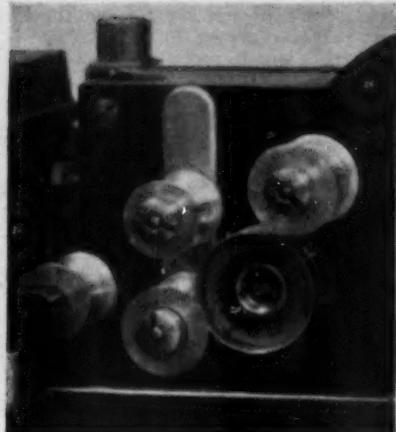
A 'DANGEROUS DRUG'

Sir.—Over the last few years the number of amateur colour films made in this country has, due to better quality and supplies, increased phenomenally. A wave of the 'must use colour' attitude is now submerging amateurs just as, some fifteen years ago, it submerged the professionals. It is only to be hoped that, like our big brothers, we forget—or nearly forget—the whole thing as soon as possible, for colour is much too dangerous a drug for film makers to play about with.

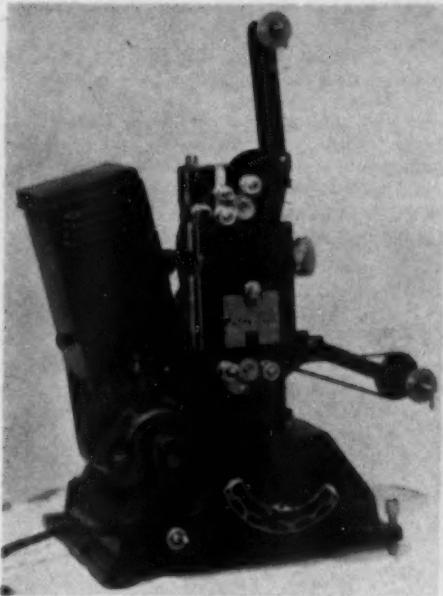
E. H. Higginson, who probably voiced the opinion of hundreds of amateurs in saying that colour is 'the most important part of the hobby' (May), recommends that 'the amateur wishing to turn out really first class work should study the old masters.' By all means—if it helps him to realise the complete futility of trying to control colour with a cine camera. A painter, who can mix and apply his colour, who is in complete control of atmospheric conditions and who is in a position to distort light and form to suit himself, may spend a lifetime trying to get just one canvas (or frame) right—and he does not have to worry how it will look if seen directly after his previous and later work.

Granted colour has its advantages. If spliced in with black and white film it can have a certain shock value—already partly exploited by Hitchcock; and it is a fact that it can affect temperature. If red is predominant in a scene, the temperature in the cinema can rise considerably, while green and blue lowers it. I can think of only half-a-dozen films which would not have looked as well or better in black and white.

So far as the amateur is concerned, it is



Right : Mr. J. G. Thompson's Pathé H fitted with the attachment described in col. 2. Above : Close-up of the sprung roller.



The Workshop

CURING LOOP LOSS

Sir,—I enclose photographs of an attachment which, with the help of a friend, I have made and fitted to my Pathé H projector.

It is a sprung roller which keeps the film pressed on the top sprocket, and thus prevents the loss of loop caused by the film jumping off at splices. This has always been a source of trouble with the H projector.

The attachment consists of a two-inch length of $\frac{1}{4}$ " brass curtain rod tinned over with solder, which gives a fair match to the dull plated parts of the projector. The arm is drilled in the centre to pivot on the wide shoulder of the spindle behind the roller, and the unnecessary roller at the bottom of the gate removed and re-mounted on the bottom of the arm. A safety-pin type spring made of piano-wire presses this roller on to the sprocket and completes the attachment. Adapts usually reduce the value of the projector when selling, but this little gadget can be removed in five minutes and the projector returned to normal.

WELLINGBOROUGH. J. G. THOMPSON.

This is an ingenious, well-made device, and if we regard it as a luxury it is because, in our experience, the Pathé H does not give trouble when in correct adjustment and used with properly spliced films in reasonable condition. Being hyper-critical, we think we detect two minor disadvantages : it will slightly increase fusing time and it can be faulted academically since an additional guide or restraint should be positioned at or near the point of entry of film on to sprocket. But these are small blemishes to be offset against every

surely more important that he should master the much more difficult and less technical arts of editing, continuity and pictorial composition rather than seek the almost impossible by trying to make the camera lens adopt the characteristic property of the eye : the power of being able to select, reject and retain colours.

SCHEFFIELD, 11.

J. MICHAEL DAWSON.

THE STORY MORE IMPORTANT

Sir,—I think Mr. Higginson's views on colour (May) call for some comment. I have seen only one of his films and can testify that he is an expert on colour (his film, "Autumn," which won the colour award in the 1949 Scottish Amateur Film Festival is a delightful piece of work) but surely he errs in thinking colour to be the most important part of our hobby.

Surely telling the story properly is the most important element in film making? This is very aptly put in the editorial on the National Amateur Film Awards when, speaking of the judges' task, it is stated : "Consider the film *only* as a vehicle for the expression of the particular bit of creative endeavour the producer has tried to present."

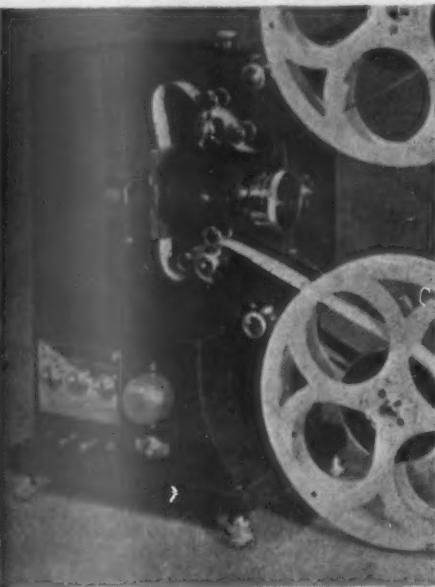
A film is not a series of good pictures but a knitting together of a series of pictures (even bad ones) to make a rhythmic whole. I know this full well because my own photography has been quite often described as 'corney,' but I think my films entertain the type of audience for whom they are intended.

MORNINGSIDE, JOHN O. RUSSELL.
EDINBURGH.

good job; the fact that it works and obviates the trouble experienced by our correspondent is its own justification.

16mm. PROJECTOR FOR £14

Sir.—At a cost of only £14 I have built the 16mm. projector illustrated in the enclosed photograph. It could have been made for less by sacrificing the quality of the components used, but the machine was constructed to a specification rather than down to a price. I should never advise an



No, not a commercially-made machine, but a home-built projector (See this column).

enthusiast to build a projector just for the sake of owning an article that cost little to build. Even if the components are of good quality, unless the finished product does justice to those components and is a saleable article, then the venture, in my opinion, is not worth while.

Nine months ago I sat down to design the machine, and after littering the house for two months with scribbled sketches the projector building began. The three main castings are of aluminium alloy and were cast to my own pattern, being finally machined all over with a rasp and file! Readers may be interested in the specification:

200 or 300 watt lamp with built-in resistance or 500 watt with external transformer; 2 inch, f/1.6 Bell & Howell objective lens; interchangeable two and three blade shutters; removable pressure plate; forward and reverse movements and

still picture device with automatic heat-resisting shutter; positive claw shuttle with adjustment for wear; matched "slip-in" condenser; power rewind; built-in pilot lamp; optical framing device; stainless steel gate; external adjustment for reflector; 4in. blower for lamphouse; centralised oiling system; independent (but electrically interlocked) motor and lamp switches.

So that the projector may be readily converted for sound, the gate, sprockets and rollers are relieved over the area of both picture and sound track. The spool arms fold to make a compact machine. I have fitted a radio interference suppressor and have achieved remarkably quiet operation by the use of helical gearing and a quiet running motor. The machine has a wrinkle finish relieved with chromium-plating.

BRECHIN, ANGUS. ■ E. N. REYNOLDS.

INSTEAD OF A VIEWER

Sir.—Having just finished making the first hundred splices with my new Marguet splicer, recently reviewed by A.C.W., I must say it is quite the nicest I have so far used. One point worthy of mention is the fact that there is no white line across the splice when seen on the screen, because the emulsion on the film not scraped overlaps very slightly the emulsion left on the scraped section. This means that enough cement must be applied to fill up the slight hollow where the scraping finishes. In spite of the apparent danger of this feature, all splices made so far appear to be very strong.

You will gather from my remarks that I have been editing a film. Some points came to light in doing this which may interest readers. We must imagine the usual modest editing requisites—a rewinder, splicer, boxes for holding shots, the script—but no viewer. So how do we locate the frame at which to cut when our projector must be in action to avoid burning the film?

We take an old piece of film, scrape the emulsion from an entire frame, and run the film through the projector with our finger on the main switch. The instant we see the flash we switch off and note where our scraped frame has come to rest, thus being assured of the position of a chosen frame under similar circumstances in the future. This always seems to come out within about two frames, which for my needs was adequate.

If the wanted frame turns out to be in the gate, the inching-knob must be used to bring it into a position where it can be cut or marked. Marked? Pencil is hopeless and crayon is not much better, but the ideal medium is Wolff's 'Talcmarca' crayon, made by the Royal Sovereign Pencil Co.,

Ltd. This stuff will even write on glass, and comes in boxes of ten sticks. It is really good, and marks, preferably on the base side of the film, can be readily located.

ST. ALBANS.

L. M. SARGENT.

Magnetic Recording

TOWARDS STANDARDISATION

Sir,—May I endorse the demand of your correspondent Mr. A. C. Barrett (May) for standardisation of track position for magnetic S.O.F. Some discussion in "Ideas Exchanged Here" would be an excellent preliminary. In order to show that there are alternative points of view to the "Aunt Sally" put up by Mr. Barrett, here are a few comments in the same spirit.

(a) Experiment has shown that it is possible to use a magnetic track of 0.5mm. width outside the sprocket holes, and it is therefore feasible to put the magnetic track on the opposite edge to the SMPE photo standard, and so allow both types of track to be used simultaneously. However, since the output of a given head is roughly proportioned to the track width, such a narrow track will not give such a good signal/noise ratio as one of say 2.5 or 3mm. width on a single-perforated film.

(b) Since it will be required to coat the magnetic layer on to the film after editing (the abrasive nature of the coating would play havoc with a camera), it is suggested that it be placed on the non-emulsion surface of the film, since a cellulose lacquer binder is the best medium found to date, and this sticks better to the celluloid surface. This means that for standard SMPE emulsion position, the magnetic track will be towards the lamp in the gate.

(c) Recording involves the use of microphones, mixers, tone compensation, tape equalisation, etc., and it is not economical to accommodate all these on the projector. Better, therefore, to have the whole of the recording equipment, except the head, in a separate box.

(d) Passage of a magnetic recording over any magnetised metal parts will increase the noise level and may cause permanent serious distortion, or, in extreme cases, partial erasure. It will therefore be essential that projectors have all pieces which may come near the track—e.g., gates, sprockets, etc., made of non-magnetic material.

Stray field from the motor, particularly the electrical-governor controlled types, has an equally, if not more serious effect, and it will probably be necessary to shroud both motors and transformers, and also the film path, if damage to the track is to be

avoided. Stray field will also be picked up directly on the reproducing head, and constitutes the most serious form of unwanted noise.

(e) It seems unnecessary to duplicate the sound transit arrangements, when a slight displacement of synchronising distance would allow both photo and magnetic tracks to be accommodated with a single drive. With tracks on opposite faces, and possibly on opposite edges, of the film, it would not be at all difficult to design an arrangement so that scratching did not occur.

In general it may be said that a frequency response up to 5,000 c.p.s., better than most release photo prints, can be attained without too great difficulty at 16 f.p.s. With suitable bass cut-off to balance the high frequency cut-off of 5,000 c.p.s., and with stray fields suitably held in check, a track width of 3mm. will give a signal to noise ratio of about 45db, or a 0.5mm. track a ratio of about 30db or better. (The average library photo print has a signal to noise ratio of about 20 to 25db for the same distortion.) The overriding difficulty is these stray A.C. fields, as may be appreciated when it is realised that the output from a nominal 200 ohm head of typical design at 100 cycles per second is only about 5 millionths of a volt for a fully recorded tape of standard 1in. width.

Having had six years of professional research in high-fidelity magnetic recording, I realise that magnetic film tracks have their drawbacks and their limitations. The recording is so easily ruined by accidental magnetisation that it is not likely to be used for 16mm. release prints; but for sound tracks on personal reversal films—even those with sprocket holes on both edges—it is a practical proposition at 16 f.p.s., if and when certain projector snags have been overcome.

But after the fiasco of the DIN v. SMPE photo track position battle, I think a firm standard will be required before any manufacturer will commit himself to a design, and since it will be we amateurs who will use magnetically recorded sound most, it is up to us to say what we want, and to stand by our decision.

LONDON, W.12. E. W. BERTH JONES.

"THE IDEAL SOLUTION"

Sir,—As we in this club have had quite a lot of experience in magnetic recording, perhaps I may be allowed to reply to some of the points raised by Mr. Barrett (May).

1. Already Kodak and Ansco in America have obtained a licence to manufacture film coated with a magnetic material, the original intention being to put the coating between

the sprocket holes and the edge of the film. However, even if sound stock is used, the sprocket side will have to be coated too, in order that the film can pile up evenly.

2. There are several drawbacks to using projectors for recording:—

a. The supersonic frequency supply to the exciter lamp would not be satisfactory for the recording bias, as, although it might be in the nature of 45 K/c.s., the voltage would be insufficient.

b. The amplifier, too, would have to be re-designed as regards gain and equalisation, if good results were to be obtained.

c. The main difficulty, however (as we know to our cost!) is to prevent electrical and mechanical interference in the magnetic head.

3. Synchronisation exact enough for a commentary, can already be obtained by a separate recorder and projector, provided they both use synchronous motors.

Lip synchronisation can similarly be obtained by a mechanical or electrical connection to the projector—always with the difficulties of post-synchronisation and the possibility of tape-slip being kept in mind.

4. Since the magnetic film will be supplied already coated, the adding of sound to an existing silent film will always mean copying the picture on to this special stock.

Incidentally, the copying of magnetic tape can now be done by contact (as opposed to re-recording) and one of the chief drawbacks, when compared with S.O.F., seems to have been overcome.

16 f.p.s. is rather slow for good quality recording, but improvements in coating may help this. If the question of interference can be solved, I think the ideal solution would be:—

a. Separate tape recorder.
b. Magnetic head on projector, with cable to recorder.

c. Sound camera, with similar head and cable, for lip-synchronisation. The picture/sound distance would still have to be standardised, of course, and would probably have to be greater than S.O.F.

In conclusion, I would like to thank Mr. Barrett for airing the subject. I hope my reply has not been too destructive!

GLASGOW C.C. W. B. COCKBURN.

RECORDING A COMMENTARY

Sir,—Although it is quite often just as well to have some assistance when post-synchronising sound with a tape recorder, I have recorded quite a number of commentaries using my Cine Soundmaster

without any help at all. The method I use is as follows:—

I run the edited version of the film through and make a list of the scenes and sequences. Assuming that I am not going to read from a script, I make myself familiar with the flow of the scenes and after getting a fair idea of how my extemporaneous commentary will go, I run the film through as a sort of final dress rehearsal, speaking, but not recording, the commentary. Then I am ready to record.

The film is set in the gate after rewinding (as a sync. mark on the film, I have a blank frame scratched on the black leader, and this goes in the gate aperture) and the tape sync. mark is set on the recording head. I sit with my back to the screen, facing the projector and Cine Soundmaster, with a shaving mirror in the line of vision immediately below the stroboscope I have fitted to the Soundmaster's flywheel. Thus I can see the action on the screen (in reverse, of course, but that doesn't matter), and I can also see to check motor speed by means of the stroboscope. As the speed control knob of the Kodascope is on the underside of the lamphouse and relatively awkward to operate quickly, I have clipped a spring clothes peg around the knob, which gives me a small lever with which to adjust motor speed.

EAST GRINSTEAD.

HENRY STANDEN.

Showmanship

COMPLETE WITH "ORGANIST"

Sir,—I have just completed the building of a home proscenium which I think may interest A.C.W. readers. In addition to its normal use as a proscenium the incorporated cut-out of the "organist" overcomes the problem of holding the audience's attention while the operator changes films. The photographs give an idea of the simple construction.

A non-reversing motor has been used as the whole operation of curtain open and close, console up and down, is effected in one cycle. As the console comes up the curtains close and vice-versa. Two loud-speakers, one in each wing, give first-class results.

Screen lighting is red and blue with a spot-light on the console and the whole set-up is controlled from an ex-R.A.F. remote control box. The Celfix screen rests on two brackets at the rear of the proscenium and can be removed when required.

Hardboard was used for the main construction, painted dead black, and relieved by polished aluminium strips. The letters



below the console are my initials and are, fortunately, appropriate.
BRIDLINGTON.

C. SHORT.

HOUSE LIGHTING CONTROL

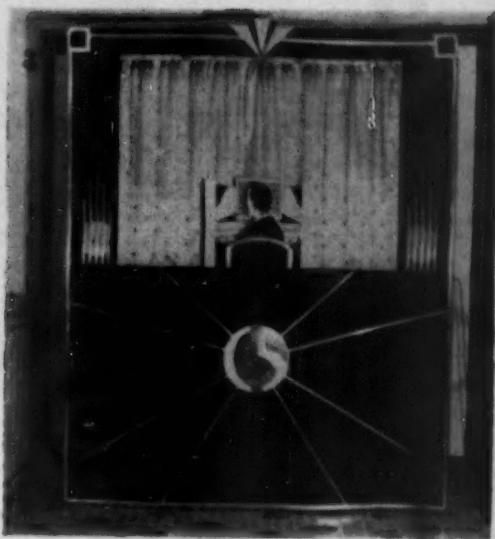
Sir,—Denys Davis, in "Movie Maker's Diary" (April) suggests that the lights at the back of a hall should be switched on first after a film and that the front lights should be switched off first at the beginning of the programme. Taking the latter case, I always switch the back lights off first, as I think this tends to concentrate the audience's attention towards the proscenium. Also a light left on for a few seconds at the back would probably cause members of the audience to turn their heads to see what was going on. At the end of a film I reverse the procedure to avoid head-turning and gradually bring the attention of the audience back into the hall.

Our club has several of the excellent "Woolworth" lighting fittings in use, as described by Denys Davis, but wonders what is the best method of making a base for the telescopic mast.

ST. JAMES F.U.

ASHBY BALL.

The ex-R.A.F. control box (top left) is used to control the curtains, console and lighting of the ambitious proscenium shown to the right. The lower picture, a rear view of the proscenium, shows the curtain / console mechanism. (See letter, "Complete With Organist" on opposite page.)



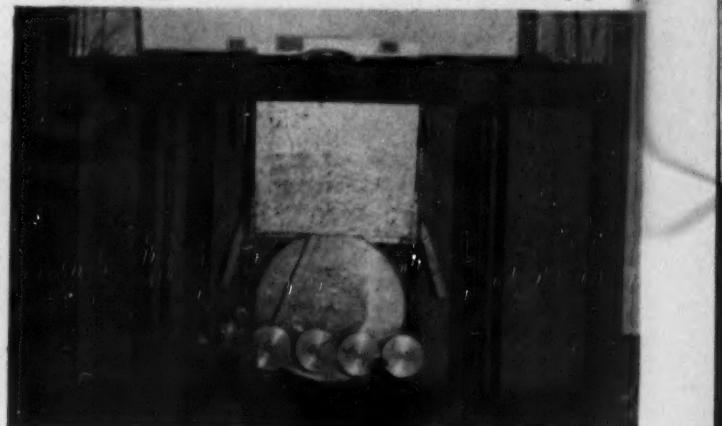
BAIE GOED ENTERTAINMENT

Sir,—Reading the letter of your Durban correspondent C. H. Courtney (April) prompts me to tell you of my own efforts to entertain the public on a small scale. There are about 200 families living here in a Government village (ex-army camp) with no bioscope for about eight miles.

I have a 200B Plus and started by giving a show to six friends and their children, but my rooms were not big enough. Since film shows of some kind were wanted here, I approached the Local Welfare and P.W.D. who very kindly gave me permission to use an empty mess hall.

I cleaned up this hall, painted a silver screen on the brick wall at one end, covered

(Continued on page 248)



Monsters in Your Garden

... Well, not monsters, really—just caterpillars. W. G. Baines explains how he filmed these and other garden denizens, for his prizewinning film "Nature's Way," one of the 1949 National Amateur Film Awards.

When I started taking shots of birds and insects I had no intention of making a film about them, and certainly the thought of showing such a film in public had never even occurred to me. I had probably taken about half of "Nature's Way" before my wife and friends persuaded me to make all the odds and ends into a complete film. The 'odds and ends' I had taken up to that time consisted for the most part of pictures of birds feeding their young. Blue tit, big tit, blackbird, swallow and great spotted wood-pecker are all shown in close-up and medium close-up feeding their fledglings. The lack of an over-all plan has inevitably resulted in inadequate continuity in some of the earlier work, though I have tried to weld all the material together with a recorded commentary.

I must confess to being handicapped from the start. You see, although I have always been interested in natural history I am a very indifferent naturalist. I had never studied the subject seriously, and in any case the knowledge one requires for this type of work is not readily found in text books.

I am fortunate in the apparatus I was able to use: a Bell & Howell 70DA

camera set-up for a number of sequences in "Nature's Way." Its use is described in these pages.

camera with 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 in. lenses, a B. & H. Goertz reflex focuser and a B. & H. alignment gauge. A tripod is not steady enough for micro-filming so I mounted the camera on the solid wooden base shown in the illustration. A longer base was made for use with the 6 in. lens. A home-made titler completed the outfit. (All titles are double-exposures of a beech-tree and cards embossed on a Masseley show card machine.) The





entire film (900ft.) was shot on 16mm. Kodachrome.

The reflex focuser (no longer obtainable at present) which made possible the ultra big close-ups of insects consists of an extension tube $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. long in which there is a movable prism, a ground glass which shows the exact field to be photographed and a magnifying eye-piece to facilitate the focusing of the very fine detail. By moving the prism in and out of the path of the rays coming through the camera lens, the image can be thrown either on the ground glass, for viewing and focusing, or, by pulling down the prism, can be allowed to pass through on to the film. The knob for moving the prism can be seen underneath the focuser.

The effect of this reflex focuser is to make the focal length of the lenses used greater by $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. This, of course, alters the effective apertures of the lenses so that calculations were necessary before any filming could be done. Details of the new apertures were entered on a card for easy reference.

Frame enlargement of a close-up of the Puss Moth Caterpillar growing a leaf. Sheets below show (left to right) chrysalis in cocoon, two of the caterpillar's many feet and caterpillar engaged in spinning cocoon. From the film "Nature's Way."

The amount of alteration is very large in the case of the 1 in. lens where f/8 becomes f/3.5 and is progressively smaller until with the 6 in. lens f/8 becomes f/6.5. The fields covered are just over a $\frac{1}{4}$ in. in width with the 1 in. lens and $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. in width with the 6 in. lens. This is somewhat disconcerting at first as it seems contrary to ordinary photographic practice, but when one considers that the extension is $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. in all cases, it will be seen that it is not proportionate—hence the results. The depth of focus is also much greater when the longer focal length lenses are used.

The alignment gauge is for focusing the object, and although it can be used for rough focusing and the focusing mount of the lens for finer adjustment, I do not follow this practice but use the sliding movement of the alignment gauge only, thus moving the camera bodily to focus the image. Considering the accuracy of the focus required it is surprising the results one can obtain from this apparently rough and ready method.

In the photograph it will be noted that the alignment gauge, underneath the camera, is at right angles to its normal position, its real purpose being to shuttle the camera sideways for viewing and focusing. The approximate positions at which the various lenses focus are marked on the side of the stand.

The small table, 3 in. x 2 in., on which the specimens to be filmed are placed, is mounted on a spring-loaded universal joint. There is also a spring-loaded rise



and fall movement which enables the subject to be moved into any desired position.

My first serious attempt at micro-photography was in 1941 when I took just 50ft. of the Six Spot Burnet Moth and a grasshopper. This seemed to me to give rather striking results but it was not until 1943 that I began to work in real earnest when the great tits and blue tits were filmed. Later in the same year while on holiday in Wales I saw a Fox Moth caterpillar feeding, and it seemed to me that it would be very interesting if it could be filmed to show just how it took nourishment. It was, of course, impossible to see this with the naked eye.

The caterpillar decided on non-co-operation and would not eat when I wanted it to, so at the end of my holiday I carried home two of them, with the object of 'directing' them in my garden. But it was a slow job. In the course of the next few weeks, however, one caterpillar became much more friendly and would eat almost to order.

I used my 2 in. lens (shown fitted to the camera in the illustration) to take the extreme close-ups of the Puss Moth caterpillar feeding. I have no desire to exaggerate the difficulty of this work, but I must record that at first filming seemed almost impossible; the image is inverted, the field photographed is only 1 in. wide and I could not accurately estimate to where the caterpillar would eat by the end of the shot.

If it moved only a fraction of an inch towards or away from the camera, it was completely out of focus. Owing to the alteration of the effective apertures of the lenses, filming could only be done in brilliant sunlight. Brilliant sunshine? How often did I have to kick my heels waiting for it? And then there was the great difficulty of discovering how to persuade the subject to perform the required action when all other conditions were right. However, the necessary technique was gradually acquired.

For most of the shots of the birds I used a home-made electrical release and the 4 in. lens. The camera was set up in the open, I retired to some distance and when the birds were doing something

interesting—returning to the nest, feeding their young and so on—I operated the electric release. Had I to film the more shy birds I doubt if this method would have been successful.

The butterflies, Peacocks, Tortoise-shell and Red Admiral were taken with either a 1 in. lens set at 1 ft. or a 2 in. lens set at 2 ft., the distance being measured by a range-finder, which I had to re-calibrate to attain the necessary accuracy.

The insects—Fox Moth caterpillar, grasshoppers, Puss Moth (eggs, caterpillars, chrysalis and adult), Five Spot and Six Spot Burnet Moths, ladybirds and greenflies were all taken with the aid of the reflex focuser.

The filming of the Puss Moth section, which will be seen at the A.C.W. public shows, was begun in August, 1944, when I was given two Puss Moth caterpillars. I was soon able to take all the shots of them eating that I required and then, by good fortune, one of them decided to spin its cocoon on a sunny Sunday afternoon and I was able to shoot the spinning sequence.

There was then a break until 1946 when I was given a number of Puss Moth eggs. As it was obviously impossible to film them in the box they came in I had to lever them off with a razor blade and stick them on the leaves in a natural-looking arrangement—a difficult operation since they are very little larger than a pin's head and none of the adhesive must show. The young caterpillars were then filmed emerging from their eggs.

Much to my wife's indignation I reared these caterpillars in the garage. Twenty-eight of them eventually spun cocoons, and the moths emerged in the following year, but not, alas, at a time when I was able to film them. Indeed, I still consider myself lucky to have been able to get shots of just one breaking out of its cocoon.

Although (as I have mentioned) there is a recorded commentary to "Nature's Way," the principle I follow is that any subject photographed must be shown with sufficient detail so that little explanation is necessary and the film can be screened without the aid of a commentator.

IDEAS EXCHANGED HERE

(Continued from page 241)

up the windows, purchased 50 yards of cable to carry electricity from my bungalow to the hall, made a switch board, fitted a hall light, put up a poster and hired some films to last about one hour. The first audience consisted of ten children and two adults. I suggested a very small contribution of from one penny to a ticket (3d.) and this was readily agreed to.

I billed another show for the next week. This time there were twenty children and ten adults. I hired more films for a 1½ hour show, and then about thirty children and twenty adults turned up. I have now had to move my projector back to get a 12ft. x 10ft. picture. The hall is now packed every Saturday night, but I have almost exhausted my supply of films.

Takings for these shows since I started total about £5, and after paying for films and accessories, I am out of pocket by about £1 10s., but who cares? The kids (and the parents) love the old silent bio, so I'll continue until there are no more films to show. I have already run out of 16mm. and am now using 9.5mm.

Please keep our magazine as it is. It suits us down to the ground, or as the Afrikaans would say, it is "baie goed" or "lekker." If any of your readers would like to exchange shots of Cape Town for any of their shots, I am interested.

RETREAT,
C. MURRELL, F.I.Cye.T.
CAPETOWN.

THAT FILM SHOW

Sir,—I was present at the screening of feature films to which Denys Davis refers in his Diary (May). I agree that a bad beginning creates a poor impression and that great care must be taken in preparation, hence my amazement at a programme of a more publicised society which began with "THE END" and had to be *re-wound* while the audience waited! This mistake was doubtless part of the fun.

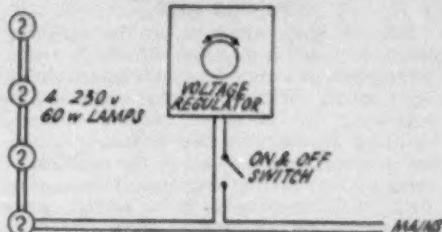
I firmly believe in criticism but let it be constructive; the account seems long and rather laboured if merely to complain in the last two and a half lines of "lack of planning and misleading advertising."

EDGWARE. K. O. PAWLEY.

INEXPENSIVE DIMMER

Sir,—Since sending you details of my proscenium (June 1950) I have added a dimmer, details of which I give below.

I obtained an ex-Admiralty voltage regulator (300 ohms) which enables me to dim, or practically dim, four 230 volt 60 watt coloured lamps. With the resistance full in the lamps just give a very faint glow and a switch completes the dimming. The



Simple wiring diagram for the dimmer and lights described by Mr. Kelsall.

regulator measures 7in. square by 5in. deep and weighs 10 lbs. I obtained mine from a Manchester government surplus stores for 4s. 11d.

I have also powered my curtains using the method outlined by A. Turner Scowcroft in the March issue of *A.C.W.* The system works very well indeed! I, too, used a government surplus motor.

WILLASTON. D. H. KELSELL.

THUMBS DOWN FROM DOWN UNDER

Sir,—Numerous correspondents have described their elaborate prosceniums. I think it is time that a voice was raised in protest against these coloured lights, posters, miniature orchestras, etc. There is no particular reason why amateur filmmakers should imitate the more gaudy aspects of professional presentation methods.

We are often reminded that we have the advantage of not being restricted by commercial consideration in choosing the theme and treatment of our productions. Surely this also applies to their projection. My ideal is a plain screen concealed in a wall behind a panel which would silently slide aside upon pressing a button.

To conclude on a less controversial note. I am authorised, by the Melbourne 8mm. Club, to extend an invitation to any British amateur cinematographer visiting Melbourne, to pay us a visit while here. Address is: 12 Railway Pde., Camberwell. (Phone W.F. 3861). We tolerate 9.5mm. and 16mm. enthusiasts.

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA. A. D. MAIN.



Sir,—My *A.C.W.* doesn't leave my hand until it's been read from cover to cover, then my wife takes over! You certainly manage to pack a fund of information and interesting reading into each edition. Incidentally I use a B. & H. Sportster purchased from the local Filmo Depot, secondhand. It's been back to B. & H. for a complete overhaul and they've done a grand job on it—as good as new.

H.Q. LAND FORCES. H.H.C. (CAPT.)

FILMING RAIN

Sir,—A film, which is in the scripting stage, includes a sequence in which action takes place in a very heavy rainstorm on an open moor. While the detail shots of rain spattering in puddles, swollen streams, dripping leaves, etc., are relatively simple to "arrange" in dry weather, the problem of securing convincing long shots of action in the downpour remains to be solved, since the actors, not to mention myself and the camera, take a dim view of getting a wetting in a real storm. In any case, long-shots of "natural" rain are seldom satisfactory.

"Hose-pipe" or "watering-can" techniques, while allowing one to shoot in dry and well-lit circumstances, bring a host of difficulties in their train when one is miles from a water-main, or even a pond. Here is an idea: why not add the rain effect by superimposing it on the already photographed action at a later date, per "hose-pipe" under the controlled conditions and in the comfort of one's own home?

I tentatively suggest shooting "hose-pipe" rain against a dead black screen—with the help of a photo-flood or so placed in the best positions to show up the drops. If one made a careful note of the footage of each part of the action, one could vary the lighting and size of the drops to match the shot. Has any other reader tried this idea?

ROCHDALE, LANSS. KEITH W. BROOKES.

We can't think of any theoretical objection to the method suggested but there are many practical objections for the amateur. We have not heard of its being done, though we ourselves once had to shoot rain in an exterior night scene, and having arranged the artificial rain found great difficulty in lighting it convincingly, for we got highlights from our photofloods, just as we have so often seen in the professional Cinema, whereas a moorland rainstorm has "gray" rain, without sparkle, as illustrated on page 1067 of our April issue. We strongly advise shooting on location: surely one within reach of a spring or pond could be contrived? Or a car can carry a couple of 2-gallon casks which will be enough for about 4 minutes' shooting.

"SHAMATEURISM"

Sir,—In bringing before your readers the following anomaly, I crave (like your columnist Mr. Sewell) the excuse of greying hairs, for I was working hard with a 9.5mm. camera as far back as 1924, and what is more, processed my own reversal films in the backwaters of the Malayan jungle until the early thirties. Certainly they were not films of the calibre of to-day's productions, but, nevertheless, they were of quite good quality (as quality went in those days). So I can quite rightly claim to have been an amateur for many, many years.

A few weeks ago I had reason to consult your very excellent department regarding the exact ruling of the word "amateur" with respect to our own particular hobby.

Frankly, the answer dumbfounded me. I was of the opinion that the word is descriptive of someone who cultivates a *pastime* for the love thereof, yet I find that according to international ruling, anyone within the profession may call himself an "amateur" providing he is neither director nor cameraman, and that as such, may enter freely into open competition with others who are totally unconnected with the production of films "for gain."

It seems to me that this ruling is totally unfair to the *real* "amateur," for the man who is connected daily with any profession picks up far more information about it than could the person who spends his working day in, say, the sale of soap. It is well known that many lighting experts are cameramen of the highest calibre, and there are many others who have access to the sets, art departments, editorial and cutting depts., laboratories, etc., who know the work of their confrères well enough to "stand in" in case of emergency.

Yet the poor seller of soap has to erect his three pitiful photofloods, and even assuming he may have the most up-to-date camera made, how can he hope to compete against our lighting expert who is free to bring the wealth of his experience into his own individual effort, or, if a club member, to his film unit? Poor old Soapsuds!

One could permute *ad infinitum* the many loopholes which such a system offers, and I would be very glad to hear other readers' views on this "shamateurism." I note that two gentlemen, known to me personally as being engaged in the professional ranks, have each collected a Highly Commended, one in the Ten Best, 1949, and the other in the I.A.C. Competition.

LONDON, N.W.3.

DONALD CURRIE.

According to the Union Internationale du Cinema d'Amateurs, to which some twenty countries, including Great Britain, subscribe, "a film is an amateur film when the non-professional maker (the term 'professional' being deemed to be limited to the profession of cameraman and director) has had no financial or commercial object in making it." By this ruling, a film made for his own amusement by a professional film editor, for example, would be regarded as an amateur film.

REDUCTIO AD ABSURDUM ?

Sir,—The letter from J. C. Aumonier on the subject of reducing 9.5 to 8mm. (April) appears to me to require a lot of swallowing. To say the least, your correspondent must have had his tongue rammed well into his cheek! The method described is so simple that I cannot think why I have not thought of it before! There is no mention as to how the projector was synchronised with the camera, especially bearing in mind the difference in "timing".

of the two shutters, nor is any explanation given as to the manner in which the glare from the lens on a translucent screen was eliminated.

I changed over from 9.5mm. to 8mm. some time ago and was faced with the problem of projecting my early films until I acquired an Ensign projector which takes all three sizes of film. It needed a considerable amount of overhauling and is still not entirely satisfactory on all three sizes. I should be grateful if any reader possessing one of these machines and preferably living in the London area would contact me as there are certain points on which I should be grateful for some information.

BEDDINGTON, CROYDON. L. G. BOOMER.

Before publishing Mr. Aumonier's letter we raised with him substantially the same points as those made by Mr. Boomer. Mr. Aumonier wrote that he noticed no undue flicker in his film. He states that he did not go to a great deal of trouble with the first experiment but has since copied some other films and has offered to furnish details of the outcome as soon as they are received back from processing.

Ten Best

GIVE US BACK OUR 'TEN BEST'

Sir,—Oh, what a mistake I think you have made in discarding the old familiar title 'The Ten Best' for your distinctive and unsurpassed amateur cine competition, and substituting instead the awful mouthful 'National Amateur Film Awards.'

So many other bodies, some good, some much less good, have promoted so-called 'National' competitions; why make the A.C.W. contest just another one of them? The so-called 'National' film awards of the daily Press have little prestige in the minds of those who really know films, being the result of voting by masses of people many of whom have little real qualification for judging. Why allow the newcomer to imagine that your own is just another of these affairs, when we know that your winners are picked out by truly competent judges?

And what a pity to throw away your original easy flowing, easy sounding title. When others have talked of their winners, how satisfying it was to be able to say, with due *empressement*, 'But have you seen the Ten Best?' Please give us back our 'Ten Best'!

HAMPTON HILL, GEORGE H. SEWELL.
MIDDX.

BRADFORD OPINION (1)

Sir,—On behalf of all our members I should like to offer our very sincere thanks for the wonderful Ten Best show. It was a huge success, almost 700 being present (is this a record?) and everyone said how much

they had enjoyed the films. We used two 750 watt Filmos and a 10ft. beaded screen, the picture quality being very good. We must have sold nearly a hundred tickets from the Diary entry in A.C.W. alone.

BRADFORD CINE A. C. WHITEHEAD.
CIRCLE.

BRADFORD OPINION (2)

Sir,—A capacity audience packed the hall, all tickets being sold out, for our successful presentation of the Ten Best at Southgate Hall, Bradford. Visitors came from as far afield as Barnsley and Skipton, and the Leeds Club arrived in force by coach.

We thank you for backing the show with well arranged programmes and showbills. On the whole our members were disappointed with the films; we had expected a much higher standard of photography and technique. We are encouraged to continue competing in the Ten Best competition for we do not consider this selection any better than our own work and in some cases not as good.

Our next club production is to be a documentary on Wharfedale, in Yorkshire.

BRADFORD. G. RUSHWORTH.

PROOF

Sir,—I am very happy to say that our Ten Best show went off 100%. We had a capacity house of 250, and had we been able to obtain a larger hall, I am sure the attendance would have been very much greater.

All the films were very well received, and many remarks were heard to the effect that it was not realised that such films could be made by amateurs. However, they had plenty of proof of the fact and it has been brought home to a considerable number of people in the district.

HULL & DISTRICT A.C.S. CHARLES SMITH.

"LOTS OF INTEREST"

Sir,—The Ten Best was an excellent show, creating lots of interest. We look forward to seeing the 1949 films and hope they will provide as much food for discussion. But we didn't think much of your suggested music, so we fitted most of our own.

Thank you for your co-operation in all matters pertaining to the show and for the punctual arrival of programmes, bills and films—particularly films—in time to let projectionists and music men get a good look at them. (Club librarians please copy.) Here's to the next time.

A.C.A., NEWCASTLE. GEO. CUMMIN.



Members of the Belfast Y.M.C.A. Cine Society take a shot for the Y.M.C.A. centenary film, "In the Heart of a City." Note the sunshade/filter holder on the Bolex.

The 16mm. film presents the only solution . . . It offers an opportunity of trying for miracles.'—Jean Cocteau, 'Focus on Miracles,' New York Times Magazine, October 24, 1948."

Do the majority of us appreciate the substandard film as a medium to aestheticism?

DENBIGH, N. WALES.

R. A. LLOYD.

DAYLIGHT ON FILMING

Sir,—I must take Mr. Fountain to task for his remark in the May issue that an A.C.W. of the pre-war page size would be "lucky if it sees the light of day again." What an admission to make! If he is a really keen cine man he will want to see his A.C.W. again or else he must be one of those super-super beings who, having 'read' A.C.W. can retain every single fact and picture in his marvellous mind! Which I doubt.

Personally I store my old A.C.W.'s (I have it from No. 1) flat, in the bookcase with a card strip with the year on it projecting from the pile. In addition I have a system (and this applies to other mags) in which, in an alphabetical index, I make a note of the items which interest me most and those which are likely to prove of assistance later on.

As for "not seeing the light of day again," I can turn up in less than a minute any article I want and I am constantly referring to my copies. I find them too indispensable to throw away and I feel this will be the view of most of your readers.

Long may you flourish!

ARNSIDE, LANCS.

H. F. COCKSHOTT.

ST. VITUS' DANCE

Sir,—I enclose a newspaper advertisement (not about films) which resuscitates the maddening fallacy that before the sound era everything on the screen jerked and flickered. Will nothing ever convince people that this was not so? I know that you have taken up this matter before, which is why I take the liberty of drawing your attention to this latest example.

KETTERING.

H. D. WILLIAMS.

9.5mm. ON SPOOLS

Sir,—Shame on you! 9.5mm. stock not available in 50ft. daylight spools in this country? Have you never heard of Gevaert? Nevertheless, I would like to know why all these new cameras coming from the Continent are all 16mm. and 8mm.

WEYMOUTH.

GERALD W. GILL.

Touche! Our statement in the May issue was certainly much too sweeping. We should have said: 'Not generally available,' for it is a fact that 9.5mm. film on spools is not held in stock by every dealer.

WELL WORTH WHILE

Sir,—The Ten Best show was very well attended on both nights, some of the audience having come quite a distance to see it. There was an awakened interest in amateur films, which may have done us some good. This was our club's first public show, and the experience we have gained from it has been well worth while. Thank you for all your co-operation which contributed in no small measure to the success of the presentations.

GLASGOW C.C.

W. B. COCKBURN.

PRAISE FOR "THE BIG FISH"

Sir,—I enclose a review of the Ten Best show, written by a dramatic critic, which appeared in the local press. I don't think that "The Big Fish's" reception was entirely due to local patriotism. To me it seemed a model of putting over a message concisely and humorously, but perhaps I'm biased in its favour. ("The Big Fish"—runs the report—"was as expertly made as any we saw, and the most completely satisfying of all, with one possible exception"). Thank you once again for the smooth organisation from A.C.W.

BARNET F.S.

T. LLOYD EVANS.

★ ★ ★

"TRYING FOR MIRACLES"

Sir,—The following, from "Hollywood Quarterly," will no doubt express what most of us feel towards substandard film work.

"An Art in which youth is barred from practising freely is sentenced to death in advance. The moving picture camera should be like a fountain pen, which anyone may use to translate his soul on to paper.

FINDING NEW ANGLES

AT YOUR CINEMA :

By LESLIE WOOD

Sometimes one despairs of professional directors ever embarking on new themes, and then up comes a film to prove one wrong. Just because a theme is new, however, it does not mean that it is necessarily good. There has been controversy about "Chance of a Lifetime," the independently made film which none of the major circuits would touch and which a Board of Trade committee has now ordered to be shown.

I know the men who book for the circuits. I have sat through hundreds of trade shows with them. Their only reason for turning down a picture—and they turn down many—is because they do not think it box-office. No doubt that is the reason they gave the thumbs down sign to "Chance of a Lifetime." The film is sincere, well acted, adequately produced but it will scarcely interest the average working man and girl (and they are the mainstay of the box-office) because it deals with factory life, problems of management, with works' committees, in all of which every worker may be burningly interested but which does not represent his idea of entertainment for his leisure hours at the cinema.

The amateur film maker will doubtless find "Chance of a Lifetime" absorbing, interesting and well presented, but it is unlikely that he will leave the cinema experiencing that feeling of 'lift' which a really good picture ought to give. It is a cinematic tract about an agricultural machinery factory in which the workpeople are at loggerheads with the boss, Basil Radford. In a fit of impatience, he tells them to try running the place themselves if they think they can do better than he can. They make a valiant effort until it comes to finance and export difficulties, when they are glad to have the guv'nor back again as their partner.

It is as simple as that, and it has an

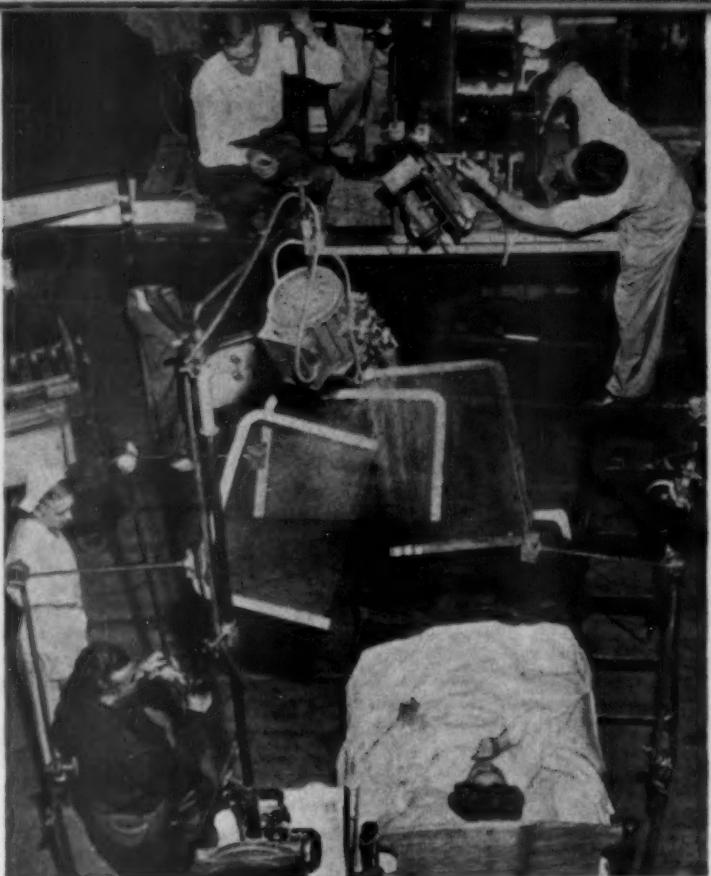


Impvised travelling 'crane' built for "Chance of a Lifetime."

amusing character in Bernard Miles as the working man who takes over the boss's chair along with another son of toil, and a very neat piece of unobtrusive acting from Josephine Cooper as the person whom the Works never can understand; the guv'nor's quiet, faded secretary, who, though she is miles apart from the men in overalls, really has a very warm spot for most of them.

But even a problem picture should have box-office angles such as a love story, and it should have suspense greater than that propounded by the question: Can workers take over management? British compromise is the film's climax—let's all pull together,

One of the most impressive sequences in "No Man of Her Own" graphically illustrates Barbara Stanwyck's impressions of the scene from her hospital bed. The camera takes her place so that it is we who look up at the ceiling, see inverted figures in surgeon's masks gazing at us, watch while the mask held by the anesthetist approaches until it blots out everything. These scenes demanded the exercise of considerable technical ingenuity but . . .



which is what a properly run factory aims at from the start, anyway.

The picture was made in an abandoned factory in Gloucestershire. Its sets are therefore real but more commonplace than those an art director would have designed. Camera movement in the office scenes is heavily restricted. Clever use is made of windows, people inside the building being taken from outside. We see the recriminations, the thumpings, the scowls, but do not hear a word. That is a worthwhile new angle.

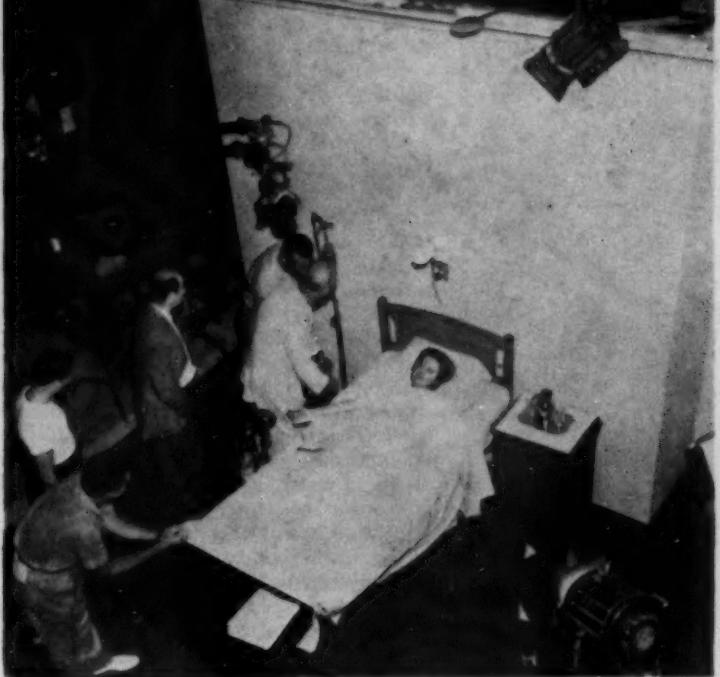
And, talking of angles, note the shot which shows a solitary figure leaving the factory yard, lonely and desolate, when Bernard Miles's working class associate walks out on him. Eric Cross directed the photography and Ray Sturgess was at the camera.

I like to think that this angle was Ray's choice, for Ray Sturgess and I started together as amateurs in Apex Motion Pictures, a club using 9.5mm.,

and learned our craft by filming (don't we all?) thrillers on Sunday mornings in the slums off Tottenham Court Road. He took it so seriously that he worked his way up to being cameraman on Laurence Olivier's "Hamlet."

Ray and I were always hot on angles in those early days, days of the German directors who were climbing up on the chandelier or crawling into the back of the fireplace to get angles that were different. They were different all right. But that overhead shot of the lonely yard is no freak shot. It is justified. It puts over the situation. So, as a lesson in shooting in confined spaces—and what amateur studio is not confined?—make a point of seeing "Chance of a Lifetime."

Most amateurs are too conservative with their cameras. In the Barbara Stanwyck vehicle, "No Man of Her Own," which is a box-office story in typical Stanwyck vein of a girl who puts her shady past behind her and gives



... but, as these pictures show, no less care was taken to secure the less dramatic angle shots. The professional producer goes to endless trouble to build camera set-up even for shots which may appear as little more than fugitive glimpses on the screen. One of the latest developments of the audience - in - place - of - the - camera technique will be seen in a forthcoming M.G.M. picture, "Right Cross," starring Ricardo Montalban, Dick Powell and June Allyson. Montalban, as the boxer, delivers his punches directly at the camera which is protected by pads which take the form of a huge lamp head.

her unborn baby a name by taking a married woman's place following a train wreck in which both are involved, there are some noteworthy camera angles.

At the outset Barbara cries and clamours at the door of the upper flat occupied by her betrayer. He won't answer, but he pushes a roll of rail tickets and a ten-dollar bill under the door to encourage her to go out of his life. She picks up the tickets but does not see the money, which flutters to the floor.

She goes downstairs and, quite naturally, the camera pans down with her until she has gone below us, cut off by the landing floor, and we are left looking at the ten-dollar bill now in the foreground. Being contrived without straining, the impact—her going away penniless, is doubly dramatic.

The cameraman makes a good job, in conjunction with director Mitchell Leisen, of the train wreck. Barbara Stanwyck and the girl whose place she subsequently takes are in the washroom. One is looking into a mirror, making up in a close shot, when the mirror bursts into fragments.

In full shot, the whole set now turns a complete cartwheel with the two girls flung about it like dice in a cup. Obviously the set is an open-ended box pivoted at the back and turned over by stage hands. Now there is a shot of flaming wreckage in the dark, and that is all that Barbara Stanwyck knows of the smash. Her next impressions are what she sees from her hospital bed just before surgeons deliver her of her child.

We, too, are looking up so that the screen is filled with plain white ceiling, one burning electric globe in its centre. Then we start to move, passing under door lintels, and arrive under a blinding cluster of lights and know we are on the operating table. Upside down figures in surgeons' masks gaze on us, that is, their bodies are at the top of the screen and their heads point downwards to the middle of the picture. Finally the rubber face-piece through which anaesthetics are pumped comes down over the lens to obliterate everything.

Those angles would take a lot of improving. In passing, notice the shot of a telegram which leads into a later sequence. It is suddenly thrust before



For the call-box shot in "Chance of a Lifetime," the producers have used the real thing instead of constructing it in the studio. Since the film was shot in a real factory, camera movement in the office scenes was restricted, but clever use is made of windows, people inside the building being shot from outside.

us without any build up. We do not even know where it is, let alone who is holding it. Shadows fly across its surface diagonally as we read.

When we pull back, we see that it is Barbara Stanwyck who is reading it on a train. Those moving shadows are poles and arches flashing by outside. It makes an otherwise ordinary sub-title type of telegram insert arresting and unusual.

The story which follows is compounded of the discovery of the dead woman's in-laws and their taking of Barbara to their hearts, and embroilment in murder to prevent the past catching up with her present. The awful business of dumping the body in the path of a slow moving goods train is full of suspense, incidentally, though we never see the train but only hear it approaching with slow, mournful, laboured chuffs. It is an unusual sound counterpoint and seems to fit the ugly mood of the scene as few other noises could.

I wish there were more original angles of the kind in "Last Holiday" (starring Alec Guinness, Beatrice Campbell and Kay Walsh) the first production venture of a concern sponsored by J. B. Priestley, his literary agent, and others. Priestley is, of course, an old hand at the picture game. He wrote some of Gracie Fields's early comedies. But his scripts are apt to be bookish. He uses characters who are good types for novels but who do not always come alive on the movies. The trouble is that they are too much Priestley and not enough themselves. The master pulls the strings all the time.

The story is good if not original. A young man with six weeks to live decides to have one last glorious holiday. Strangely enough, he chooses a hotel full of bores and types, the eccentric inventor, the lady's companion bullied by her aristocratic mistress, and, of course, there is a Priestley politician, too.

It has irony: the young man with only six weeks to live is now offered chances to make his fortune out of holiday camps and fish and chips, but it has little new to say and no new angle in either script or photography. Good angles can make an ordinary film less

ordinary. Fresh, arresting, but not freakish, camera work will not only hold the attention but make the film distinctive and vital.

The camera is something far more than just the eyes of the audience who will ultimately look at your work. It is a character in the film, the interpreter of your story. Give it a chance to tell the story to the best advantage by making it get up or down from its ordinary tripod level, even showing your characters on occasion as seen by the cat or the canary. Freak angles used merely for the sake of novelty have no value, but a purposeful angle shot can often work wonders.



"Mrs. Poole! It's all been a mistake! I'm not going to die!" Alec Guinness in a shot from "Last Holiday."

ODD SHOTS

SELECTED AND PRESENTED BY

GEORGE H. SEWELL, F.R.P.S.

After the Ten Best—my five entries for the little competition I arranged for a four-minute film depicting character. I would like, if I may, to devote the whole of my space to them. Detailed crits. have gone to the makers by post.

"Introducing Joan," by Stan Joseph, was, he tells me, an attempt to build up the idea of a faithless character. She is seen playing a gramophone, admiring a gift of nylons, smoking a cigarette in a long holder, reading with obvious cynicism a letter from her husband, then eagerly preparing herself and waiting at the window for her lover. When he arrives she kisses him passionately, treading on her husband's letter which has dropped to the floor.

I am afraid that the acting was not of a high order, and the whole thing somewhat redolent of melodramatic pictorial clichés. The maker has only succeeded in presenting a somewhat familiar puppet type. But it might be regarded as a brave try.

"Owd Bob," by W. S. Dobson is all about an elderly carpenter. We see him arrive at work, unpack his tools, start planing, the clock tells us it is lunchtime, he eats his sandwiches, has a short nap, the clock again, he hurriedly resumes work, then packs up and goes home. Continuity is very sketchy in places, the man switching from planing to sawing, for example, without any

proper transition from shot to shot or time-lapse device to cover the change. All we learn is that he is old, that he is a carpenter, that he works, eats and goes home. But we learn nothing about the man himself, whether he is meticulous, bad-tempered or what have you. No, sir, I am afraid "Owd Bob" did not come off.

A school bag carries the title of "Andy," made by Mr. Dobson's 15-year old son. It is a much better film, with cleaner continuity in spite of a few lapses and a keener expression of character, even though the subject was a very usual type of small boy. Briefly, he is awakened in the morning and while his father (at intervals between dressing, shaving and feeding the fowls) makes repeated attempts to hasten him, sonny plays with a toy, jumps up and down on the bed in high spirits, looks out of the window. You get the impression that he is quite a nice boy, but irresponsible in the way that young boys often are.

There is one quite lovely shot, made with low glancing light coming partly towards the camera, of father walking through the garden in the early morning. Then continuity breaks down rather. Both father and son appear somewhat unexpectedly at breakfast (father was last seen walking away from the house),

and breakfast seems to be a mighty brief affair. Then the boy goes off and out of the film, kicking his way along the street. With a little additional shooting "Andy" could be made into quite a worthwhile little *genre* picture.

All the foregoing were 16mm. I also had two 9.5mm. entries. Mr. L. J. Freeman's film is naturally titled by an Income Tax demand, addressed to R. E. Neale, Esq., lying on a sheet of music—so you are prepared for a chap who is interested in music. Then come shots of a 'cello in a corner, a piano, books on a shelf with B.C.U. titles, "Musicians" and "Orchestral Technique," which latter more closely specifies the subject's interest.

Meanwhile he has been gazing at the Income Tax envelope and then we see him sitting down to compose or orchestrate. He is a stoutish, comfortable man with potential irascibility in his features. When a woman brings in a cup of coffee the music is more important to both of them and she goes to a piano and plays the work, while he listens critically. At the conclusion he drinks the coffee, making a wry face at the milk-skin on the top of it which, in B.C.U., he removes with a spoon. The reel ends with a zoom towards the bottom of the cup as he holds it inverted to his lips.

Yes, this does give an idea of a specific character but I would like to have seen a more definite reaction to the Income Tax demand, since this would have thrown further light on it.

We have a dictum with regard to the making of instructional and propaganda films : "Tell 'em just one thing and tell

Festival of Britain Competition

Amateurs in Northern Ireland have the opportunity of competing for some very attractive cash prizes offered by the Festival of Britain 1951 Committee (in association with the Belfast Film Institute Society) for the best 16mm. amateur documentary films on subjects connected with the life and background of Northern Ireland. There will be a first prize of £100, two prizes of £75 each and two of £50 each.

Subjects may be drawn from Ulster industry, agriculture, horticulture, housing,

it well." Mr. K. Feldmesser's film is one of the most satisfying in this respect, even though it was primarily made as part of a holiday record. The opening sequence shows a train coming round a bend, a girl entering the train, in the carriage and alighting at Padstow; but this is a little redundant for the purposes of my competition, and makes me wonder how far it is back to the bathroom at the end of the reel. But it is pleasantly and smoothly done.

We see a landscape shot of a bay, the girl enters the scene, retires behind a rock to undress, there is a nice little cut away to some rocks and waves to cover the time lapse, and she is seen in her costume. She rushes towards the water, hesitates and looks perhaps a little too dismayed, and we see her feet retreating hurriedly from the water which is obviously cold.

We cut directly to the same feet walking on a fluffy towel, then one set of toes testing the water in a bath, then a hand reaching out from a bath to a cup of tea on a side table next to some sandwiches. Cut to girl reading comfortably in the warm bath water and final shot of toes comfortably wriggling in the water at the other end of the bath. Some small criticisms might be levelled at the time-lapse continuity towards the end of the reel, but you are left with one paramount impression : Gosh ! Isn't that girl fond of comfort !

Well, thanks, gallant few, for your entries and also for your nice letters. We'll do another one some day, shall we ? Then some of you others can have a go. Don't hold back merely because you're a novice at the game.

fisheries or the daily scene in town, village, seaside or country. They should reflect typical or distinctive aspects of life in Northern Ireland. Should entrants desire advice as to choice of subject, the Festival office will be glad to discuss it with them.

Further information may be obtained from the Secretary-Controller, Festival of Britain, 1951, Committee for Northern Ireland, 64, Chichester Street, Belfast. Running time must be not more than 30 minutes, and entries must, of course, have been shot in Northern Ireland. They may be sound or silent monochrome or colour. Closing date: February 1st, 1951.

A MOVIE-MAKER'S DIARY

By DENYS DAVIS

May 1st. Time now to give your camera the once over before making that holiday film. Don't smother the mechanism with oil, but a judicious drop may save a jam when you are away from home. Have a look at the edges of the camera where the door meets the body. They may have rubbed away with wear and need re-blackening, for bright metal can cause light leaks on a brilliant day.

Berlin black is the best paint to use or, at a pinch, try using a spot of black poster paint. By itself, this won't adhere to the metal, but if you first run your brush over the gummed flap of an envelope, the colour will then cling without trouble. A spot of the same treatment for the inner metal surfaces of your lens to cut down stray light is a further useful tip.

For travelling I always pack film in the middle of a suitcase. The clothing packed around the cartons makes a good insulation against temperature changes. Loading and unloading is best done indoors but if that is not possible, in a shady corner. For cameras with daylight loading spools, always slip half the tin *over* the take-up spool before removing film from your camera.

Final tips? A good velvet-lined camera case soon saves its cost. A soft Selvyt cloth for cleaning lenses and filters, a deep lens hood for sunny days—or any other time for that matter—and insure your camera for a few shillings before you go.

May 7th. There is at least one amateur filer who is disappointed that his film did not secure a place in the A.C.W. National Amateur Film Awards. He had, I know, put a tremendous amount of work into directing the film and I was quite anxious to see what he and his colleagues had done.

Now I know no more about the

judges' reactions to any of the films than you do, nor do I pretend to know why this film failed. I certainly do not disagree with their verdict but cannot help wondering if they rejected the film on the grounds that I should have done had I been in their place.

In his film, which clearly had been shot to a careful script, there were two glaring faults: bad direction and bad editing. To be fair, the second was the result of the first. All the characters had over-acted badly, gestures had been emphasised and essential movements slowed down. To make matters worse, all the camera positions had been held too long, with the inevitable result that a choice of shots to cover the essential action was not available.

At some stage of the production, this had been realised and the editing had been "speeded up." Unfortunately, the *middle* of many shots had been removed so that the characters jumped about the screen in a most ludicrous fashion.

I felt very sorry for the makers of this film because every one concerned had obviously put some effort into it and it



The reporter types his story. A shot from "Meet Me in the Local," one of the two Fourfold pictures figuring among the A.C.W. 1949 National Amateur Film Awards.

had been shot to what must have been a good script *on paper*. The film really collapsed like a pack of cards for want of timing which, of course, is a matter of direction. For this simple fault, I should have rejected the film. Perhaps that sounds harsh, and maybe it is, but most movie makers have overcome the elementary hurdles. If they haven't, it shows up right from the start of their films and distracts terribly from the subject matter.

May 8th. Dennis and Eric were chatting about their last year's holiday film tonight. Some time ago they took my tip and on their return home filmed extra insert shots to liven it up.

Now it is nearly completed and does, they tell me, hold the interest far more readily than before. Recently, I noted another filer whp had also had a go at mocking up shots for his film on the Isle of Man motorcycle races. All scenes of the winning end of the race had been filmed from the spectators' enclosure and, of necessity, from one camera position. So he had set up several rows of chairs, banked up in his garden, and filmed some friends and relations looking left and then rapidly right. A good idea!

What had spoiled this trick, however, was the repetition of the one shot *ad infinitum*. After the fourth time or so, every member of the audience must have tumbled to the ruse. In our Fourfold films, we have got away with murder and have one or two pet shots which haven't—so far as we know—been rummled! This is only because they are so short that the viewers don't have time to spot obvious errors in them.

May 12th. Every film needs a script. For weeks past, Speedy has been planning his, shot by shot. He has even timed each set-up in terms of feet and plans to make a 300ft. film with 400ft. of Kodachrome. He'll never do it!

This isn't a straightforward scenic that he's working on, but a story film with matching shots, continuity of action and all the trimmings packed into a fortnight's hiking holiday in Devon. Taking scenes at all times of the day, I know that he cannot possibly hope to match his colours throughout and that,

when the shots have been re-assembled in the final order, he will be in for some nasty shocks.

The film as scripted opens with preparations for going away, the journey down and the start of the hike. With a masterly flourish of the pen, the train journey is *out* and the film stock reserved for that sequence is now to be used for little insert shots that will bridge the jumps in colour values during editing.

May 20th. Many thanks to all the readers who sent in suggestions for a portable lighting kit. I haven't yet got around to making one up since it will not be needed until the Autumn, so I'll write more about it then.

Meanwhile, mention of this reminds me that I can pass on a good tip for improving your summer films. It is to use a photoflood in a reflector set near the camera when filming close-ups in bright sunlight. It lightens the shadows surprisingly well and adds quite a "Hollywood" touch to the films.

We were using a light like this last year when, during a take, somebody tripped over the cable and the light went out. Of course, we had to do it again but it was only when we saw the rushes of the first take that we realised what a tremendous improvement the light makes.

I make no allowance for exposure when using this light since it only affects the deep shadows around the eyes, under the chin and so on. This tip applies only to monochrome filming, of course—it is not applicable for colour.

May 24th. As usual, travellers will be filming the illuminated signs at night, half speed and lens wide open. This is just to remind you that the best time to do this is *not* at night but at twilight when the sun is well down. On the screen it still looks like night, but the buildings have shape and form and do not merge unseen into the black borders of your screen.

LOST FILM

Taking up cine work again after four years, Mr. D. Thompson, of 207, Mapchester Road, Accrington, finds that when in 1946 he sold his Paillard projector and two Pathescope reels, "In Search of Adventure," he inadvertently included his own 250ft. film, "Wesley Magazine" in place of Part 3 of the Pathescope film. If the purchaser who, he thinks, lived in the Bolton area, still has this film, he would be grateful if he would communicate with him.

This is the second of an important new series on constructing a magnetic recorder. The first article appeared in last month's issue

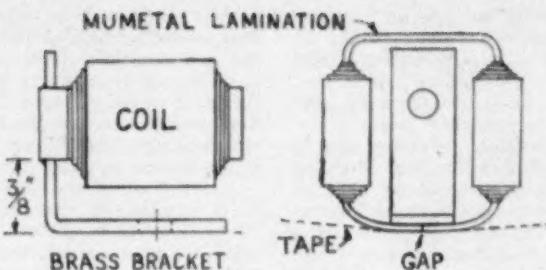


Fig. 1. The bent strip type head.

COMPONENTS FOR YOUR MAGNETIC RECORDER

By DESMOND ROE

In the first article in this series the theory of magnetic recording was dealt with at some length but the components required to build a magnetic recorder were only briefly mentioned. Now these, the various heads, the distortion-removing supersonic oscillator and the special tone control will be discussed in detail.

All three types of head, record, playback and erase, are very similar. They consist essentially of an iron alloy core in the shape of a ring or loop (or it may be rectangular) with, at one side, a very narrow gap across which the tape is drawn. Head diameter may vary between $\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 inch.

Heads are usually made up of two semi-circular stacks of very thin laminations in order to reduce eddy-current losses at high frequencies. A high permeability, low loss iron alloy, such as Mumetal, is used for the record and playback heads to obtain the sharpest possible magnetic field at the gap, which, physically, is less than .001 in. wide. Silicon iron is used for erase heads, where a wider gap is also required to give a slowly decaying magnetic field.

Filing, cutting or bending reduces the high permeability of Mumetal, which is normally annealed by a special process before assembly into heads. A quite good recording/playback head can be made, however, by bending a single strip of Mumetal carefully into ring form, and butting the ends together to form the gap. Low impedance coils are used as only relatively few turns of thick wire are needed, and may be layer wound and self-supporting.

The heads described below are all wound to an inductance of

about 1 millihenry. This gives a suitable A.C. resistance, or impedance, for "matching" to the loud-speaker terminals of a standard amplifier for recording, or for plugging-in for play-back instead of a moving coil microphone. It is important to note, however, that the A.C. resistance of an inductance varies with frequency, actually being equal to $6.3 \times$ inductance \times frequency, and bears no relation to the D.C. resistance. Matching methods are therefore somewhat different from those followed with loudspeakers, etc.

Head Construction

For amateur use, quite good recording/playback heads can be made fairly easily with single strips of Mumetal $\frac{1}{8}$ in. wide, .015 in. thick and from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 in. long. These dimensions are not critical but it is very important that the metal be Mumetal (or Permalloy-C). Mumetal laminations are generally to be found in parallel-feed radio transformers and in microphone transformers, and are a silvery-white or silvery-grey and not easily confused with ordinary grey iron stampings.

Sometimes Mumetal is colour coded blue or magenta. It is not recommended to use the Mumetal from cathode ray tube shields

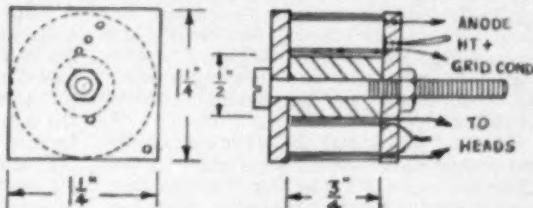


Fig. 2. The oscillator cell.

which seem to be of an inferior quality. Mumetal from various sources should be tried for best results. Laminations coloured grey or orange are Radiometal; if brown, Rhometal. Both these metals may give improved results for an erase head.

It is most important, in order not to destroy its high permeability, that Mumetal should be cut, bent or filed as little as possible, especially the parts of the lamination which will form the gap edges. It is wise to choose a lamination which provides a strip of the right dimensions directly unwanted limbs are removed. There is no need to trim a strip down if it is slightly over $\frac{1}{2}$ in. wide. If possible leave original edges at the end of the strip to form the gap. Some laminations, such as M. & E.A. Nos. 39 and 40, have "I's" of about the right size and shape already.

Clean with Emery Paper

To construct a head the ends of the strip are cleaned with emery paper, flux applied and then tinned for $\frac{1}{2}$ in. each end on the same side with a not-too-hot soldering iron. Assuming that the strip is 2 in. long, the centre is covered with two wraps of paper 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. wide, and glued down, leaving the tinned ends clear. Two marks are made on the paper $\frac{1}{2}$ in. apart, dividing it equally into three.

Starting from one of these marks, wind outwards and clockwise 18 turns of No. 26 S.W.G. enamel or double silk covered copper wire in an even layer. Wind back on top 17 turns, then 16 and finally 15 turns making four even layers of 66 turns in all. Secure with a wrap of adhesive tape. Varnish with shellac first if desired. Wind a second coil of 66 turns in four layers on the other end of the lamination, continuing the same winding sense. That is, as the lamination has been turned over for holding, the winding direction is now reversed. Secure the coil as before and twist the two lead out wires together. These should be about 4 in. long.

Curving the Pole Pieces

The lamination is now bent up into "square" form as in Fig. 1, with a pair of small pliers, taking care not to damage the wire. The ends of the lamination are pressed together with the fingers, first one under the other and then vice versa, until the springiness causes the two ends to butt together.

The two pole pieces on either side of the gap should now be carefully curved in the smooth arc of a circle so that the tape may have a level path over the gap. The two gap edges must be adjusted until they are in

perfect alignment in all respects and so that when the head is held up to the light, the gap cannot be seen, or, at the most, is only barely visible. It is absolutely vital for good treble response that the gap be as fine and perfect as possible. It may be worth while to experiment with a few blank strips before proceeding to wind the coils.

Finally, when the gap is adjusted, the head is soldered to a right-angle bracket made of 16 or 18 S.W.G. brass strip, $\frac{1}{4}$ in. wide. For soldering, the bracket is most conveniently held by its base in a vice so that the part on which the head will be soldered projects. This part is cleaned, tinned and any excess solder removed, then a smear of flux is applied and the head placed in position and held with the fingers. (The paper sleeve acts as a heat insulator.)

The lower edge of the lamination is placed about $\frac{1}{2}$ in. from the bend, and the gap positioned so that it is perpendicular to the base of the bracket. The soldering iron is now applied to the bracket with a very small amount of solder and when all is heated through the solder should run under the lamination and, on being allowed to cool, hold it firm to the bracket. The perpendicular position of the gap should be checked with a set square and the head re-soldered if necessary.

The Final Test

The gap and pole pieces are now polished with a strip of fine emery cloth rubbed across in the same direction as the tape will ultimately travel. If the head has been well made the gap will be almost invisible. The final test, however, comes after the head has been used for some time. For by then, the tape, which has a fine abrasive action will have polished brightly the places where it has touched the pole pieces, and it is comparatively easy to check the gap and whether it is in contact with the tape at all points. If it is not, the high spots may be carefully removed with a fine file, followed by a rub over with emery cloth. If, however, the gap is poor, coupled with a poor observed head performance, the head will have to be unsoldered and the gap remade.

Normally, the tape should make a slight angle as it passes over the head, touching the pole pieces for at least 1/16 in. on either side of the gap. But it is possible to modify the head slightly and make the pole pieces flat where they are soldered on the bracket. In this way the head is easier to make, but the tape has to be kept in contact with the gap by means of a felt pad on the end of a springy brass strip.

While this is a disadvantage in that an

extra part has to be made, it usually results in smoother high note response, as well as providing constant friction which is very desirable as far as the tape drive filter mechanism is concerned. Of course, it is important in this case to check by the tape polishing method that full gap contact is occurring.

The head described may be used for recording or playback or both. But in order to reduce picked-up hum on playback, it may be necessary to mount it inside a Mumetal screening can. A suitable can, $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. in diam. and $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. long may be obtained, if required, from Messrs. T. C. & M. Ltd. (Metals Dept.), Telcon Works, Greenwich, London, S.E. The body of the can is cut down to about an inch in height and a slot $5/16$ in. wide cut for the tape to enter. The can, the lid (which forms the base) and the head can be held together by means of a long 4 B.A. bolt and appropriately placed nuts.

The Erase Head

The Erase head is made in exactly the same way as the head described above but a silicon-iron (Stalloy) lamination is used wound with 200 turns of 28 S.W.G. wire. The gap should be .005 in., and is obtained by means of a paper shim, the excess of which is cut off with a razor blade after soldering. The erase gap need not be accurately perpendicular to the base of the bracket.

The Oscillator

The main part of the supersonic oscillator is the coil, details of which are given in fig. 2. The coil former is built of $\frac{1}{8}$ in. ebonite or paxolin rod, with end cheeks of $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{1}{4}$ in. ebonite or paxolin, with several small holes drilled for lead out wires. The former is clamped together with a long 4 B.A. brass bolt which is also used for mounting. Strips of stout waxed paper are used to insulate the different windings. The first winding consists of 75 turns of 26 S.W.G. enamel wire in two even layers. Cover with three layers of waxed paper. Now wind on 400 turns of 36 S.W.G. enamel or d.s.c. wire. Take out a loop of wire for the H.T. tapping through one of the small holes in the cheek, and wind on 800 more turns. Cover with three layers of waxed paper, and wind on 75 more turns of 26 S.W.G. wire in two even layers. Connect the start of this winding to the finish of the first winding.

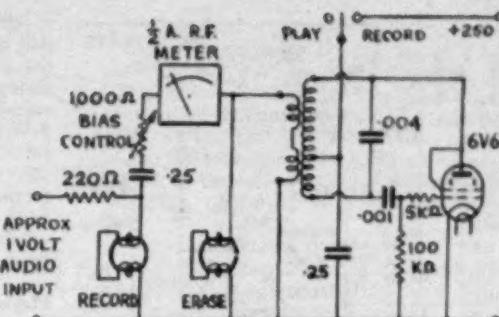


Fig. 3. Oscillator and head connections.

Fig. 3 gives the circuit of the oscillator together with basic connections to the heads and the recording amplifier. The frequency of the oscillator is 25,000 c.p.s. The supersonic frequency is usually made about five times the highest audio frequency to be recorded and is not critical as far as the removal of magnetic distortion is concerned. It can be anything from 25,000 to 100,000 c.p.s although at the higher frequencies it is difficult to get sufficient erase current to pass through the erase head owing to its increased A.C. resistance. If desired, frequencies up to about 40,000 c.p.s. may be used, and these are obtained by reducing the condenser across the oscillator coil to about .002 mfd.

A check on the correct working of the oscillator can be made by measuring the anode current of the valve. This should be about 10 mA. with the heads disconnected, rising to 30 mA. or more on connection. A 2 in. Thermocouple meter of $\frac{1}{2}$ amp. range, available cheaply from radio surplus stores, may be used to check the actual supersonic bias currents in the record and erase heads.

The recording bias normally lies between 0.1 and 0.2 amps. and depends on the make of tape used. The erase current is higher than this and may be as much as $\frac{1}{2}$ amp. (or even more) for complete erasure with slow speed tapes. Care must be taken as this meter easily burns out if overloaded. The erase head will probably run warm. If desired, for first experiments, a permanent magnet erase may be used, but this is obviously less convenient for general use.

The 0.25 mfd. condenser across the oscillator H.T. is very important. It ensures that when the H.T. is switched off, the oscillations die away slowly. Provided the record and erase heads are still connected, this results in complete demagnetisation of these heads. Residual magnetism in the heads, caused by switching

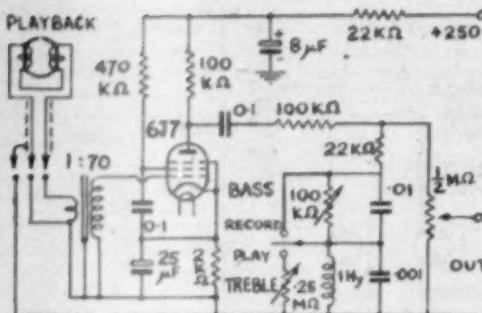


Fig. 4. Pre-amplifier and tone control for a tape speed of 7 1/2 sec.

off on an oscillator peak, causes high background noise during playback and possibly partial erasure of the recording.

Head Connections For Recording

The basic connections are given in fig. 3. The erase head is connected directly across the output of the supersonic oscillator. If, however, erasure is found not to be complete, the erase current may be increased by tuning the head to the supersonic frequency by means of a series condenser of about .05 mfd. capacity.

The recording head is connected to the output of the recording amplifier through a series resistance. As far as the audio is concerned, the value of this resistance need only be about 100 ohms. But at supersonic frequencies the head A.C. resistance is about 200 ohms, so that most of the bias current will flow into the amplifier. This may cause instability, and will certainly cause a reading on any volume meter. A series resistance of higher value is therefore used, about 220 ohms, and a condenser of about .005 mfd. capacity is connected across the primary of the amplifier output transformer to act as a bypass for the remaining bias leak.

Alternatively, a better method is a parallel coil and condenser rejector circuit tuned to the supersonic frequency and connected in series with the audio feed resistance. A suitable coil consists of 100 turns of 28 S.W.G. wire on a former similar to that used for the oscillator coil, in parallel with a .25 mfd. condenser. There are other methods of injecting bias into the recording head using second windings, etc., but on the whole the simple condenser method seems very satisfactory.

Playback Head Connections

As a low impedance head produces only an extremely small playback voltage, this has to be stepped up to a higher value by means of a transformer before being fed into the playback amplifier. A transformer of about 50/1 or 70/1 ratio, as used for moving coil microphones, is suitable, and the output voltage is about the same as for a microphone. The D.C. resistance of the transformer primary should not be much greater than about 1 ohm. The transformer should be housed in a Mumetal screening can or placed well away from mains transformers and drive motors. A screened lead will be required on the secondary and this should be of low capacity type or treble response may suffer. The leads from the playback head to transformer primary must be twisted to avoid hum pick-up.

The playback head has higher losses than the proper laminated type, and it is not worth while trying to tune the head for playback top boost. This is more conveniently done in the pre-amplifier circuit, fig. 4, which is suitable for feeding into the pick-up terminals of a gramophone amplifier. The tone control switch removes bass and puts in full top boost for recording, while on playback both bass and treble are adjustable by means of the variable resistances.

(Continued on page 266)

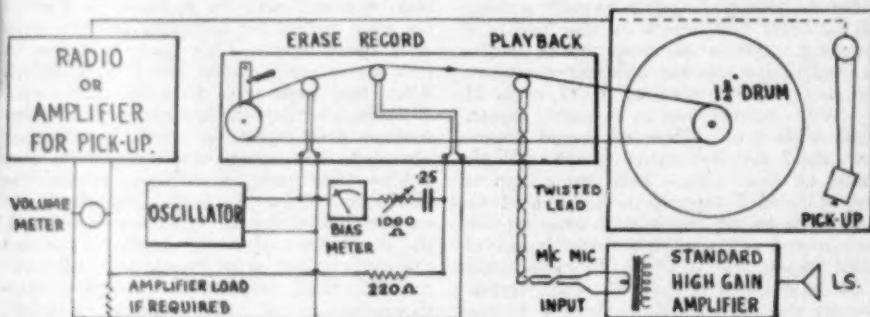


Fig. 5. The loop tester.

In Defence of the Unplanned Film

By MICHAEL CORNELL

Can entire lack of planning be defended? Spontaneity and freshness are—or should be—the distinguishing features of a family film; and admittedly planning tends to stifle them. Or does it? Isn't it really over-planning which does this? Do not attention to construction and observance of the "rules" of technique set off those features, putting them into a frame in which they shine the more brightly?

Surely it is all a matter of skill and method? If you have produced planned sequences which have failed to give satisfaction to your audiences and yourself, is their failure an indictment of planning or of you? Our contributor puts a point of view held by many. Is it one that holds water? We welcome your opinions on it,

Some amateurs can get a great deal of pleasure out of movie-making without having any conscious aim, but there are others (and I am one) who need to justify it to themselves. They want to be able to give a strong, sure answer to the question: Why are you a cinematographer? I would like to give my answer, for what it's worth, because I feel it lays emphasis on an insufficiently discussed aspect of amateur film work.

Perhaps I am easily entertained, but I find I have no need of 'plots' and 'worked-up' pieces. To me, ordinary everyday life provides all the drama I could want (sometimes, indeed, more!) 'Stories' and 'sequences' have never meant much to me—unless they happened spontaneously in real life. In all the films I have ever taken there have been only two short efforts at telling a story, and although they were quite fun to make, I count them as the least valuable of my collection.

I am a 'family-filmer' pure and simple, and in all our hundreds of feet of unplanned family film it has always been the spontaneity of the action that has been the most telling feature. No one who has seen our film can forget, for instance, the way the camera catches a lovable idiosyncrasy displayed by my sister, now dead. It is the sort of thing which could never have emerged from a planned film. It is a tag to remember her by.

To me, the cine camera is, in fact, a remembering machine. It is not an 'art' machine. You can have all your well-constructed films and plots and editing—I don't grudge them you a bit! But leave me to film the persons, places, things around me, the things that mean so much to me, without too much regard for their composition and flow.

After a while, we find, our films assume a distinctive personality. They are fresh and untouched, you might say, by hand. They do not date in their presentation, for no method was used which could date. They were simply shot as an occasion offered. It is their very faults which make them so valuable to us.

No 'Art'

To those who say that I am not, then, a serious cinematographer I will answer that to me there can never be anything so important as a faithful record of one's own life. And I do not try to instil 'art' into these records because I feel that to do so would rob them of their faithfulness to life itself (which is not artificial) as I know it.

As for titles, I will not say they are unnecessary, but the fewer there are the better. I do not find titles floating about in mid-air as I go on my way through this world. But there are titles here and there; a notice at the outskirts of my town which tells me the name of it, the calendar on my desk, which tells me the date. And these can be filmed.

People, however, do not carry labels. If they mean anything at all to me, I do not need labels to remember their names, and when they appear on my screen they do so because they mean something to me, so I do not label them there, either.

My films begin without any beating about the bush—they have no more introduction than life itself gives. Likewise, they end just as inconclusively, as we know everything does.

Recording the Passing Moment

Our family film has no words in it. It is arranged in chronological order and begins very soon after we ourselves began, and it is following us now in a sort of parallel track of its own, recording our passing moments—or rather, as many of them as I can afford to record. For I do not pretend that this is an inexpensive hobby. Yet I spend no more on it in a week than many do on smoking, and I get, I wager, far greater returns than any smoker ever got from his money!

Sound is coming, I suppose, but at the risk of my attitude being dubbed 'sour grapes,' I declare that my affection for silent films far outweighs any feeling for sound. Sound

has an irritating way of overriding us. We feel pressed down and kept in our places. We have to watch and listen. It is not *our* moment, it is the film's.

But with silent films we are not oppressed by that feeling of inferiority. We can sit up alert and discuss with our friends what is going on. I constantly break all rules and give a running commentary on what is being shown. Books on cinematography warn us that this is a reprehensible and irritating practice, but I have never found it so—and nor have my audiences, for I have sometimes kept silence when showing a film and have been chided for so doing.

Our silent films (there is, indeed, no sound equipment in my cinema except a gramophone player for the intervals) are a constant cause of excited conversation and laughter. There is no room for sound films there. But my commentary can start and stop as I please, and particular questions put by members of the audience can be answered, which could not happen with a mechanical recording.

My methods, such as they are, could be called "filming without frills" with simple but good apparatus. The film is 9.5mm. The camera is an old Pathé Motocamera, fixed-focus f/3.5 lens, which we have never had reason to change, ever since we first began using it twenty years ago. The projector is a Bolex G916 (I permitted myself a luxury in purchasing this), and I have a beaded screen. I don't even have a proscenium, because I have to carry my equipment sometimes to other houses and I find the portable type of screen the easiest to use.

Finally, I would like to make it clear that I have no quarrel with my friends in the game who choose to take a great deal of trouble over the production and showing of their films. I appreciate 'flow' and clever cutting and lighting and angles as much as any; I know it would be a pity if everyone did as I do. I salute those who can infuse cohesion into their films, but prefer to go on with my own personal approach. There is surely room for both of us in this great hobby.

We Test the New Apparatus

BOLEX M8 8mm. PROJECTOR



Ingenious film retainers and a sprocket roller which re-makes float loops are features of this new machine.

The design of the new Bolex Model M8 gives an immediate impression of compactness. It is apparent that the designer knew exactly what he wanted and accepted no compromise. The result is very pleasing. Built mainly from die castings, the machine looks solid but is not unduly heavy.

There are two models. The one normally supplied in Britain is the M8R which has a built-in resistance for any voltage between 110 and 250. The other, the M8, is for 110 and 125 volts mains only and is designed for the American market. We like the principle of having the resistance built in, because it enables the machine to be plugged straight into any electricity supply, AC or DC, without any extra transformer or resistance.

The machine is very easy and quick to thread. The top spool arm folds back to act as a carrying handle when not in use, and is erected simply by pushing it in and raising it. The spool is held on with a conventional type of turn-clip. The film is threaded round the top sprocket by pulling the film upwards until it slips between the side pieces of the retainer.

The general principle of this retainer is not novel, but this particular design is new. A side piece on either side of the sprocket is shaped around the periphery of the

sprocket to take the film. The two plates are lightly sprung in towards the sides. When threading, the two side plates gently spring apart to let the film slip in and engage the sprocket teeth. The film is easily unthreaded by pressing the top of the retainer which makes the two side plates open. The retainers incorporate a "stripper" which prevents film wrapping itself around the sprocket in the event of a break.

The gate opens really wide—about 1½ in.—for threading. The lens mount, which carries the front plate of the gate, swings forward on a parallelogram device which is sprung so that the gate stays either open or properly shut. The aperture is in the front plate, where it may be cleaned easily. The rear plate has a sprung pressure pad over the gate and claw area. The single claw movement is said to be very silent running for such a rapid pull-down, which may indicate a very slightly harmonic motion instead of a harsh change of direction for each new position of the claw.

The mechanism may be inched by pushing in and twisting the upper knurled knob on the front of the mechanism. This knob, which also serves for re-winding, is sensibly large and may be gripped easily. True optical framing is provided by a small knob on the lower front of the mechanism.

The projector we tested was fitted with a Kern Paillard f/1.6 20mm. coated objective lens. This 20mm. lens gives an appreciably larger picture than the usual 1 in. focus lens on most machines. We prefer the 20mm. lens for home use because it will give a decent size picture in the average small living room—a 3ft. picture at a 13ft. 6in. throw. The lens is mounted in a 25mm. diameter barrel with helical groove for focusing.

Lost Loops Re-made Automatically

After the gate, the lower loop is made in the film, which is then brought round to the bottom sprocket, which has the same ingenious retainer as the top sprocket. Between the gate and the bottom sprocket there is a little sprocket roller. This tiny sprocket is not driven, and does not normally touch the film at all. Its purpose is to re-make a lost loop automatically. It is really very clever. It works like this: when the loop is lost the film tightens around it and causes it to turn. As it turns, a cam on the end of the sprocket engages a fixed pin. The sprocket is mounted on the free end of a little sprung arm, and the cam action makes the sprocket move downwards and carry the film with it. When the cam reaches the end of its stroke, it releases the sprocket which springs up again,



The absence of a rear take-up arm enhances the balanced design of this "projector for the connoisseur."

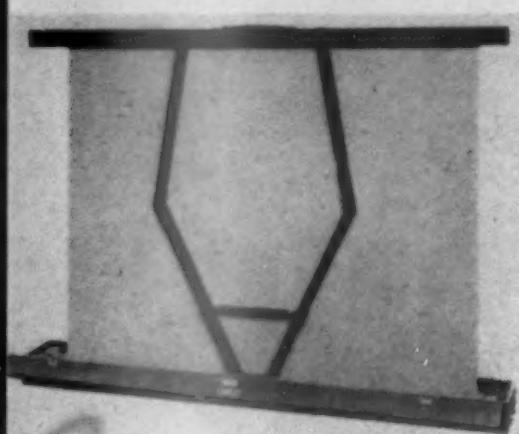
leaving the loop re-made. This all happens in an instant, so there is no need to stop the show.

After leaving the lower sprocket, the film is led underneath two rollers below the lamphouse, to the take-up reel, which is located at the rear of the machine. The take-up is directly geared from the rear of the motor shaft; the absence of a conventional take-up arm adds to the neat appearance of the machine.

A single rotary switch controls both motor and lamp. The first position of the switch is 'off,' the second starts the motor, the third switches on the lamp. The machine may be stopped instantly by pressing the release button in the middle of the switch; this lets the switch spring back to the off position. A useful feature is that a socket is provided in the rear of the machine so that the room light may be plugged in. When the projector lamp is switched on, the room light is switched off.

There is a knob for adjusting the speed of projection. The motor is also fitted with a rather novel centrifugal device which will not allow the machine to run too slowly for the efficient cooling of the lamp. If you try and run it at less than about 12 frames per second, the centrifugal device comes into action and the machine runs faster in spurts, warning the operator to advance the speed control knob a little.

The projector has a 110 volt 500 watt pre-focus lamp, very efficiently cooled by a large blower directly driven from the motor. The side of the lamphouse swings open for changing lamps. Between the lamp and the



The sprung hinged struts shown in this rear view of the Victor "Veretaut" screen make it pleasantly simple to handle and ensure that the projection surface is always taut.

We ran the machine on 240 volts and used the 250 volt tapping.

We don't know the reason for the very high light output, since we were not able to dismantle the machine to study the optics, and could not measure the lamp voltage while running. Judging from the voltage tapping used, the lamp should not have been over-volted, so it may well be a case of very good optical design. The measured light intensity was approximately 5½ foot candles on a 3 ft. screen.

The top spool arm has a built-in manual geared rewind. A small handle screws into an internal gear, and the spool turns the same way as you wind. Alternatively, the film may be rewound by motor. A spring belt is provided which may be placed between the groove of the inching knob and the top spool pulley. When the motor is started at "slow" and the inching knob pushed in to engage, the top spool is driven and the film rewound very quickly indeed.

Nicely finished in a rather unusual but very attractive dark olive green matt wrinkle paint, the machine has satin chromed fittings with the insides of the retainers polished. The gate is black. To sum up, this Bolex projector is really beautifully made and finished, good to look at and a joy to use—a machine for the connoisseur.

Price : M8R £68.

(Submitted by Cinex Ltd., 65/66 Chancery Lane, W.C.2.)

VAC "VERETAUT" SCREEN

Housed in a delightfully finished wooden box, covered in grey leatherette to match the Victor Greyline projector, this quite luxurious screen is mounted on a "roller blind" type of centre, and is erected simply by opening the box and raising the top wooden bar. A handle is provided on the top of bar of the screen itself. When it is raised the hinged struts, tensioned together by a large spring, take over, and the screen just floats up. The action is very smooth. Erected, we found the projection surface perfectly flat.

We examined a screen 40 in. wide overall. Each edge has a 1½ in. wide black border. No border is provided at top or bottom, although the wooden top bar will probably serve, but the wood is varnished on the front whereas it might have been more suitable had it been left matt as at the rear.

These screens are available in 52 in. by 40 in. size as well. Both sizes are made with a crystal bead, silver, or white opaque

surface and the prices descend slightly in that order. All have the same exceptionally attractive finish.

Prices : 40 in. x 30 in. beaded : £10 10s. 52 in. x 40 in. beaded : £12 17s. 6d.

(Submitted by Victor Animatograph Corp. Ltd., Alfred Place, London, W.C.1.)

ILFORD 16mm. REWINDER

This new rewind is solidly built from die castings, and is attractively finished in a glossy white stove enamel. Only one head is geared. It has one pair of gears, and the reel rotates in the opposite direction to the way you turn. The gears are almost totally enclosed by the disc plate which carries the winding handle—a rather clever design which simplifies the construction. The winding handle itself is sensibly large enough for easy turning. The non-gearled head has a rotatable shaft which provides a light drag on the reel.

Both heads have the shafts running in

Are You A Rain-maker?

*Then you will be interested
in this gadget for cleaning
films.*

"Rain" and a hail of specks on your ageing films? That means there's a good deal of dirt and grease to be removed. Before the war one could get reasonably priced cleaning attachments for fixing to the projector, but there is nothing of this sort on the market now. It is quite easy, however, to make one.

The cleaner illustrated was made from a length of $2'' \times 1''$ batten (hard or soft wood), planed and squared up, and cut into four pieces: one piece $12''$ long to form the base, the cross member $10''$ long, and two pieces for the uprights, $9''$ long. Assemble by screwing together or—if you are a handyman—with mortise and tenon.

The two platforms for holding the cleaning material are fashioned from a piece of wood $12'' \times 1\frac{1}{2}'' \times \frac{1}{2}''$ cut into four pieces of equal length. The two pieces forming the base of the platforms are screwed to each upright, and the top pieces attached to them with a $1'' \times \frac{1}{2}''$ hinge. The whole is hinged to the

bushes of the Oilite type, so will need only very occasional lubrication. The reel shaft on each head is $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. above the baseboard and will accommodate 2,000 ft. reels. The baseboard, attractively varnished and with rubber feet, is 30 in. long. The rewind is well made and should last a lifetime. Price: £4 15s. 6d.

(Submitted by Ilford Ltd., Ilford, London.)



baseboard of the rewinder with a $3'' \times 1''$ hinge, being held in position on the opposite side with a small hook and eye so that the cleaner can be laid flat when you want to rewind.

Small gauze pads or pads of similar soft material are laid on the platforms, which are secured with rubber bands. The film is threaded through these sandwiches, one set of which is moistened with film cleaning solution. Don't saturate the pad, for excess solution will not polish off.

Rotate the rewind in the usual way, and the film travels through the cleaning pad to the polishing cloth, tension being maintained by an even rate of turning.

F. G. S. Wise.

LARGER SPOOL ARMS FOR SPECTO PROJECTORS

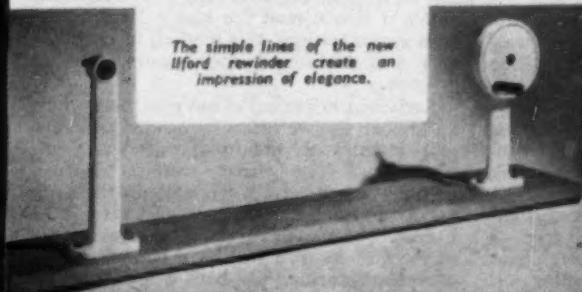
Specto Ltd. are now supplying larger spool arms, enabling 800 ft. reels to be used on the 16mm. machines, and 900 ft. reels on the 9.5mm. machines. A friction clutch is fitted to the lower spool arm, so that the larger diameter of film may be taken up without strain. These new spool arms fold

up very neatly. When folded, the top arm makes a convenient carrying handle.

The top of the lamphouse has to be recessed to take the pulley of the folded upper arm. New machines already have this small modification, and Specto Ltd. offer to make the necessary modification to older machines, free of charge, to those buying the arms which cost £3 15s. If supplied on a new projector the extra cost is only £2 5s.

(Submitted by Specto Ltd., The Vale, Windsor.)

*The simple lines of the new
Ilford rewinder create an
impression of elegance.*



MAGNETIC RECORDING

(Continued from page 260)

A suitable choke consists of 7,500 turns of No. 40 S.W.G. enamel or double silk covered copper wire on a wooden or ebonite former of $\frac{2}{3}$ in. outside diameter, $\frac{1}{4}$ in. core diameter and $\frac{3}{8}$ in. wide. Alternatively, the coil may be made from a small iron cored smoothing choke from which all the laminations on one side have been removed. The remaining "T" or "E" laminations may be moved in and out of the coil in order to tune the whole to about 5,000 or 6,000 c.p.s. It is important not to alter the value of the parallel tuning condenser, otherwise the treble boost curve shape will be altered and will not truly complement the recording loss curve for $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. per sec. tape speed.

The Loop Tester

Magnetic recording experiments should always start with a Loop Tester. As tape can be erased again and again, it is possible to record and play back continuously from a closed loop of tape, so that the results of an adjustment are immediately apparent. Correct working conditions can be found in a very short time.

A simple loop tester, fig. 5, consists of a loop made from about 8 ft. of tape butt-jointed with a patch of cellulose adhesive tape across the back. The loop is driven at the standard speed of $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. per second by means of a $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. diameter drum attached to a gramophone turntable. This drum may be cut out of $\frac{1}{8}$ in. plywood with a fretsaw and fitted with cardboard rims to guide the tape. Alternatively, a tin lid of suitable diameter might be used, with a turn of adhesive tape for friction.

The loop is held taut by means of a sprung jockey pulley on one end of a board which also serves to mount the erase, recording and playback heads. The heads are placed so that the tape overlaps the gaps by about $1/16$ in. each side. Erase and record heads may be close together, but the playback head should be spaced from the recording head to prevent "crosstalk" being picked up magnetically. Great care must be taken to adjust the record and playback gaps so that they are parallel to each other.

Two amplifiers are needed, but if only one is available, a radio set may be pressed into service for recording. The 3 ohm resistance shown is only used if the internal set speaker is disconnected. The recording and erase heads are connected as shown in fig. 3, while the playback head is connected to an amplifier designed to work from a moving coil microphone, i.e., with high gain and a high ratio step-up input transformer. The head is connected directly in place of

the microphone. For first experiments, it is not necessary to use the special tone control, as useful results can be obtained without.

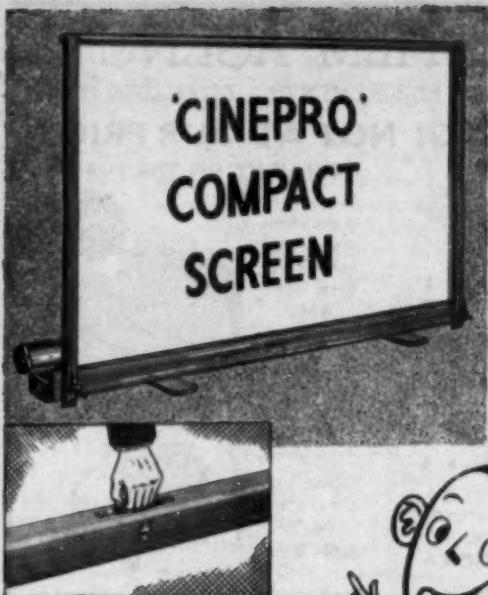
To set the playback amplifier gain to about the correct value, start the loop moving, and holding a small permanent magnet to the tape about 6 inches before the playback head, bring up the amplifier gain until there is a clear hiss in the loud-speaker.

Now switch on the radio set (or other amplifier) and adjust for LOW volume. (It is only too easy to over-record in magnetic recording.) Switch over to extension L.S. Now, as the 1,000 ohm wire wound bias control is reduced in value, the reproduction should resolve itself from vague "blurtions" into speech and/or music, and background hiss should almost disappear. Adjustment is now made to the recording level and the bias for the best compromise of low distortion, treble response and low hiss. The best value of bias varies with different makes of tape and different recording heads. Fortunately, the adjustment of recording bias is very easy and is not critical, and usually coincides with the loudest playback signal. Too high a value of bias reduces distortion, but also treble response. It also makes erasing more difficult. Too low bias results in distortion and hiss.

Once the correct bias current has been found, using a low recording level, the recording audio overload point can be ascertained by increasing the level until the reproduction starts to become "muddy." Overloading is very gradual in magnetic recording, and it is difficult to find a definite overload point. Steady music is the best test signal, provided care is taken to discount any speed fluctuations due to mechanical imperfections in the loop tester.

When satisfactory recordings have been obtained, the bias current should be noted for future use, and the average signal voltage across the radio set output measured with an A.C. voltmeter. The voltmeter can also be tried direct across the recording head to see if it will read the bias voltage. If it does give a reading, this method of checking bias will be found more convenient in practice.

Sufficient information has now been given to enable the technically-minded amateur to proceed with the fundamentals of tape recording. The writer would, however, be pleased to receive any comments that may arise. They should be addressed care of the Editor. In the third article the mechanics of the add-on unit will be discussed, and a complete recording/playback amplifier circuit will be given.



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40" x 30"	5 15 3	6 1 6	6 10 0
40" x 40"	6 10 0	6 16 10	7 8 6
46" x 35"	6 10 0	6 16 10	7 8 6
46" x 46"	7 8 6	7 15 3	8 10 4
52" x 40"	7 8 6	7 15 3	8 10 4
60" x 45"	8 2 3	8 13 6	9 14 8

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Picture Size	Matt White or Silver	Gloss Beaded
32" x 24"	1 17 6	2 12 6
32" x 32"	2 8 6	3 6 0
40" x 20"	2 12 6	3 3 0
40" x 40"	3 3 0	4 4 0
48" x 36"	3 7 6	4 7 6
48" x 48"	4 2 6	4 10 6
60" x 45"	5 2 6	6 10 6
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would prove most helpful. Only by studying the works of the masters of the medium all over the world, adapting old ideas to their particular needs and combining with them their own original material can the cine societies hope gradually to improve their product.

The vast sums spent on professional productions are not, of course, available to the amateur, but, for compensation, the latter has complete freedom to experiment and film precisely what he pleases, a facility which many professionals would give their right arm for and which has been only too rarely exploited to the full in the past.

The film society can also provide the cine worker with an additional ready-made audience, if, and this is a big if, the product reaches a general high standard. Film societies must be expected to judge amateur productions right alongside the professional material which forms their staple diet and while they may make some allowances for lack of professional equipment and finance, they will expect full value so far as ideas are concerned.

Tony Rose, in a recent article in "Sight and Sound", asserts that amateur films deserve a wider audience and continues : "The film societies, which have already succeeded in popularising foreign films in the provinces, could do much towards providing such an audience. It is an odd and regrettable fact that they have so far shown very little inclination to do so."

A part answer to this "odd and regrettable fact" may be found in another part of the same article where Denys Davis is quoted as saying : "We don't care a damn what our films are about. We don't have any message to offer. The subjects aren't important so long as they give us a chance to make interesting gadgets and experiment with new effects."

Tony Rose suggests that this attitude is the result of the lack of an audience wider than that consisting of the makers of the film itself and other similar groups. But can we be certain that it isn't the other way round ? Only worthwhile subjects, subjects with *some* kind of a

A LITTLE MORE CO-OPERATION, PLEASE !

(Continued from page 225)

message, if you like, can be expected to command film society audiences.

A good script and forceful direction can always be relied upon to win the approval of film society audiences—often despite technical failings—in both the amateur and professional product. "Open City" is a good example of the latter : it was very popular with film societies.

The facilities for showing amateur films in the film societies are certainly available. The attitude of the Federation of Film Societies has been helpful, in including amateur productions in its viewing sessions and providing booking facilities in certain cases ; the only barrier in the way of widespread distribution seems to be the quality of the films themselves.

Film societies rightly demand something special—they cannot be expected to screen films which have to be introduced with a long string of excuses—and when, in the recent past, amateur films have been able to supply that special something they have received at least a reasonably promising distribution. "Black Legend", "Our College", "Smith, Our Friend" are three good examples.

Now let us consider the advantages of co-operation from the viewpoint of the film societies. These really boil down to one thing—the chance to put theoretical knowledge into practice in the most satisfactory of all ways, by active film making. Most of the keener members of film societies must have felt the desire to try out their own hands at film making at one time or another.

After a few years the enthusiast begins to feel strongly the limitations of a society devoted solely to exhibition and longs for a chance to attempt creative expression on his own. It is this chance that the cine society alone can provide, for cinematography is, alas, an expensive hobby and those who can afford their own equipment are in the minority.



Pause for reflection. Cardiff Amateur Cine Society are fortunate in having plenty of space for filming interiors for their current film, "Peer Man's Picasso."

With the background provided by film society studies, members should be able to turn out good films in a comparatively short time. The first attempts will undoubtedly bear the stamp of inexperience, since there is at least some truth in the saying that an ounce of practice is worth a ton of theory, but provided the members are not averse from the hard grind which filming inevitably involves, their films will soon benefit from the advantages of their background and compare favourably with those produced by film-makers whose background is purely photographic.

Here it should be noted that at least three of our most prodigious film making groups—Planet, Fourfold and High Wycombe—also have a film appreciation section in their societies and that one of the 1948 Ten Best was made by the production group of another film society.

So it is to be hoped that other societies will follow the example of, say, the Fourfold Film Society in forming a film appreciation section, or of the West London Co-Op Film Society in forming a production unit. Groups which concentrate on exhibition alone or

production alone will always be handicapped when compared with a society which combines both activities, thus rendering the best possible service to their community in so far as films are concerned.

So in districts where a film society and a cine society exist at present side by side, a little more co-operation—please!

Competition News

AMATEUR films will for the first time be a feature of the National Eisteddfod of Wales which this year will be held at Caerphilly, Glamorganshire, during August 7th-12th. Documentary and interest films are invited for two classes open to all lone workers and clubs. Maximum length: 16mm., 400ft., 9.5mm., 300ft., 8mm., 200ft. A plaque will be awarded for the best film in each category. Entrance fee: 5s. Films entered must have been completed since June 1st, 1948. Entry forms are obtainable from the Secretary, Photographic Committee, Royal National Eisteddfod, Willows, St. Martins Road, Caerphilly, Glam.

Films entered for the Royal Photographic Society's famous annual exhibition must be in the hands of the selectors by August 1st. Both amateurs and professionals are invited to submit their work. Entry forms from the R.P.S. Secretary, 16, Princes Gate, London, S.W.7.

An international amateur film festival will take place at Cannes during September. All types of films, in all gauges, are invited from amateurs everywhere. Details from Secretariat General du Festival International du Film Amateur, 20, Boulevard de Lorraine, Cannes (A.M.), France.

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News from the Societies

Ardleigh House F.S. (Hon. Sec.: Mrs. K. M. Gillham, "Window," The Grove, Upminster, Essex). *Day of Wrath* and *Desert Victory* were shown by this society recently in its programme of "repertory films." The season finishes in June with the screening of *Fric Frac*. Before the *News*, made with the assistance of the local police force, three members of which appeared in the film, was completed in time for the society's annual film show. Most recent club production is a film made for a club member who recently married. The club's new Agfa 16mm. cameras will be used for the filming of a comedy, the script for which has already been written.

Birmingham C.A.S. (Hon. Sec.: F. A. Inshaw, 8, Corrie Croft, Sheldon, Birmingham). Work on the club's current production has been delayed due to the prior claims of the local dramatic society on the acting members. Club electricians are now busy making new lighting arrangements for the society's presentation of the A.C.W. 1949 National Amateur Film Awards on June 30th and July 1st. (See page 277). A projection booth is being built outside the hall with projection through a window high up at the back. Two projectors and a 10ft. screen are to be used for the show. New members are welcome.

Blackpool A.C.C. (Hon. Sec.: T. Wilkinson, 157, Westmorland Avenue, Blackpool). At a recent meeting it was announced that one member of the club had gained a "Commended" in the A.C.W. 1949 National Amateur Film Awards. A successful social evening for members and their families was held recently. *The Mandy Murder Case* is to be remade on 16mm., and club technicians are reviewing the script with a view to incorporating any small changes that may be necessary. Shooting will commence as soon as this work has been completed.

Circle Nine Five C.C. (Hon. Sec.: T. E. Terrell, 33, Pembroke Road, Walthamstow, E.17). A party of twenty members visited the projection room of a modern cinema recently. Plans are being made for a similar visit and a trip to a professional film studio. Denys Davis and Miss Audrey Morris of Fourfold F.S. visited the club recently when several Fourfold productions were screened. Mr. Davis afterwards described the making of the films.

Crouch End A.C.S. (Hon. Sec.: I. Smith, 2, Twyford Avenue, East Finchley, N.2). Two comedies (16mm. and 9.5mm.) are to be filmed by this society this summer. Mr. Reg. Cosford, the author of *Cut and Come Again* (reviewed in the May 1950 issue) visited the club recently. Regular projection evenings are to be continued during the "filming season," and forthcoming shows will include *Menilmontant* and *Easy Virtue*.

Derby & District C.C. (Hon. Sec.: Miss B. M. Wright, "Glenfield," 26, Autumn Grove, Chaddesden, Derby). Officers appointed at this society's A.G.M. held on April 24th included Mr. J. Crosby, chairman, and Mr. M. Hammersley, treasurer. New members are welcome.

Diamond F.U. (Hon. Sec.: R. C. Morgan, 124, Oaklands Drive, Baylis Estate, Slough, Bucks). The titling of this unit's current production, *Moonlite Capers* has been begun. At a recent projection evening, *Easy Street* and a newsreel of local events, made by the secretary, were screened to an audience of members and friends. Pathé PX was used for the filming of the finals of the "Neptune's Daughter" contest held in a Slough cinema recently. A local Press photographer visited the unit's studio and took photographs of members watching their screen tests. A motor coach was hired to take members to the premiere of the A.C.W. 1949 National Amateur Film Awards.

Reports for our August issue, on sale July 15th, should reach us by June 22nd.

Eccles A.C.G. (Hon. Sec.: W. Ball, 17, Charlton Avenue, Patricroft, Nr. Manchester). Work continues on the club's 9.5mm. fantasy, *Little Boy Knob*. A model "toy-town" square is to be built for an animated sequence. *Date with the Devil*, this group's most recently completed film was commended in this year's Scottish Amateur Film Festival.

E.N.S. Hackney C.C. (Hon. Sec.: W. Kibberd, 4, Eastdown House, Amhurst Road, London, E.8). This newly-formed society (E.N.S. are the initials of the three amateur film gauges) has already acquired premises for use as club headquarters at Vernon Hall, Hackney Grove. The aims of this society are the making of films—the gaining of a place in the A.C.W. Ten Best is their target—and the screening of films for members and charitable bodies. Club officers have been appointed and a committee elected. A script is being written for the society's first film. New members are welcome.

Finchley A.C.S. (Hon. Sec.: Mrs. L. K. Diffey, 160, Fordwych Road, N.W.2). In addition to the monochrome films mentioned in our June issue, three 16mm. colour productions were screened at the society's Spring Presentation show: *Wandering in Lakeland* by Katie Lunnis, *The Boys of Harrow* by G. Randell and *Zoology Through the Lens*, by E. C. Lunnis. Following the recent demonstration of a wire recorder, a club member has begun to build one himself. Scripts for *He Worked Alone*, new club production to be directed by Mr. Watts, are being slightly altered so that advantage may be taken of available locations.

Grosvenor F.P. (Hon. Sec.: R. Brinkworth, 19, Grosvenor Place, Bath). Location shots for *The White Goddess* are being filmed in Africa by Mr. Livingstone who was contacted by this society after the publication of his offer in A.C.W. last year. Special shows of Continental classics were given during the Bath Assembly to audiences which included a number of students. The publication of a monthly news-sheet is being considered. Final scenes for *Stolen Eden* are to be filmed soon.

Harrogate A.C.S. (Hon. Sec.: D. Johnson, 32, St. John's Road, Harrogate). Shots of the visit by the Countess of Harewood to a local flower show were filmed for this society's *New Review of Harrogate*. Demolition work taking place in the centre of the town provided material for another sequence. A 9.5mm. Specto projector converted to sound was demonstrated to members recently. Another member lectured on the approach of the amateur to cinematography. Members using all three gauges are participating in a club competition to take place soon. New members are welcome.

Hounslow P.S. Cine Section (Hon. Sec.: G. Hanney, 167, Ellerman Avenue, Twickenham). Since the re-organisation of the cine section last September, membership has more than doubled. A cine committee has been formed and it has been decided to hold a film competition later in the year with, if possible, a public presentation of the prize-winning films. A full muster of members attended two talks given recently. At the first, a lively discussion on the writing of a script for a holiday film, the Editor's series of articles on holiday filming was frequently quoted both by those who regard scripts for this type of work impracticable and those who do not. The second, given by the secretary, dealt with trick effects with a cine camera.

Hull & District A.C.S. (*Hon. Sec. : C. Smith, 4, Victoria Square, Ella Street, Hull*). Plans are now in hand for the production of a short racing film. Club competitions are being organised to further improve the standards of film-making. Last year's results, it is reported, were very promising, more completely edited and titled films having been produced. Fortnightly meetings will be held during the summer. Many applications for membership resulted from the society's screening of the 1948 A.C.W. Ten Best. The 1949 National Amateur Film Awards are to be screened during October. Full details will appear in forthcoming Show Diaries.

Johannesburg P. & C.S. (*Hon. Sec. : J. Ackermann, 8, Tower Buildings, 26, Plain Street, Johannesburg*). At this section's meeting held on April 18th, Mr. King presented his 200ft. 8mm. film of native dances. It was followed by a lecture on editing by Mr. P. Sacks and the screening of Mr. H. H. Walton's 16mm. 400ft. colour film, *Pondoland*.

Kingston C.C. (*Hon. Sec. : W. J. Kelsey, 24, Sandhurst Avenue, Surbiton*). A completely new start is to be made with *A Tale of Two Tickets*, the filming of which had to be suspended last year. An entirely new cast has been chosen, and it is planned to complete the film before next winter. Much of one member's spare time during the past few months has been occupied with the building of a proscenium complete with motor-driven curtains and coloured footlights. New members are welcome.

Leicester & Leicestershire P.S. Cine Group (*Hon. Sec. : R. Hill, 43, New Way Road, Leicester*). The filming of this newly-formed group's 16mm. production about Leicester has now begun after the preparation of a detailed script. An 8mm. film is also being produced. The 1949 A.C.W. National Amateur Film Awards have been booked for screening in February, 1951. New members are welcome.

Lincoln C.C. Cine Section. (*Hon. Sec. : E. E. Horner, 16, Albert Crescent, Lincoln*). A script is now being prepared for the society's next 16mm. production. Described as a "Road Safety film with a difference" this film will make considerable use of trick photography. Reversal stock was decided on after some discussion. Weekly meetings are now being held on Thursday evenings. The club's screening of the 1949 A.C.W. National Amateur Film Awards has been arranged for October 17th.

Maidstone F.S. (*Hon. Sec. : Aubrey Evans, 27, Northdown Close, Maidstone*). Now fully titled, the club's Road Safety film has been screened to the Maidstone Road Safety Committee, for whom it was made, and other interested bodies. It was reported at the A.G.M. held in May that there had been a small financial loss during the past year due to projection difficulties which are now being resolved. Following members' answers to a questionnaire distributed recently, plans are being made for the film appreciation programme for the winter season. New members are welcome.

Manchester C.S. (*Hon. Sec. : H. Percival, 97, Ashton Lane, Sale*). *Leningrad Nights and Hymn of the Nations*, from the Central Film Library, were shown on a G.B. L516 at a recent sound film projection evening. Another evening was devoted to the screening of 8mm. films when a member's Revere 500 watt projector was used. Shows of documentary films, classics, and productions from other societies will continue to be given during the summer months.

North Kent C.C. (*Hon. Sec. : H. Forward, 46, Langdale Crescent, Bexleyheath, Kent*). Members not engaged in the filming of the club's two current films—an adventure story and a comedy—are spending their spare time preparing indoor sets for the two production units. Preparations are being made for the filming of the first sequences for the newsreel of local events.

Oldham Lyceum C.S. (*Hon. Sec. : H. Hilton, 3, Chamber Hall Close, Oldham*). Now that preliminary set-backs have been overcome, work has recommenced on Dial 999 (9.5mm.). A script is being written for a 16mm. mystery film. Club productions available for loan to other societies include : *Money for Old Junk* (9.5mm., 300ft.); *Visit to Chester* (16mm., 400ft.); *Checkmate* (16mm., 150ft.); *Proof of the Pudding* (16mm., 400ft.); *Oldham's Centenary Celebrations 1949* (16mm., 1,600ft.).

Planet F.S. (*Hon. Sec. : Miss Hilda Collins, Beam Ends, Belmont Avenue, Cockfosters, Herts.*). Six awards were gained by this society and individual members in the recent Scottish Amateur Film Festival : *A Most Unlikely Story*, by Reg. Cosford, gained the Sir A. B. King prize ; *Bells of Torment* was Highly Commended ; and among the Commended films were *All Our Yesterdays*, *Cat and Come Again*, *Out of the Rut*, and *The 1948 Tourist Trophy Races*. Recent club visitors included Mr. and Mrs. Norman Chaffer from Australia who showed films of Australian bird life and gold-mining in New Guinea. An American visitor who is in this country studying film appreciation also visited the club recently.

P.M.P. Cine Unit (*Hon. Sec. : P. A. Pearce, 6, Toledo Road, Southend-on-Sea, Essex*). Work on the script for this society's 1951 production, a fictional drama, has now begun. Although bad weather hampered the filming of *Trees* and *Solar Spectrum*, progress is now being made.

Potters Bar & District P.S. Cine Section (*Hon. Sec. : P. N. Johnson, 4, Oakroyd Avenue, Potters Bar, Middlesex*). This newly-formed section has its headquarters at the Methodist Church Hall, Baker Street, Potters Bar. The next meeting will be held on June 26th, 1950. New members are welcome.

Romford & District C.S. (*Hon. Sec. : L. A. Aves, 30, Hillcrest Road, Romford, Essex*). By courtesy of Mesarin Cinex the new Paillard Bolex M 8 projector (reviewed elsewhere in this issue) was used for the screening of a programme of members' 8mm. films. Among other films shown was *Cycling* for which Mr. A. C. Williams gained the Platford Trophy.

St. Andrews A.F.G. (*Hon. Sec. : Brian R. Everett, 27, Meadowside Road, Cheam, Surrey*). After four months' preparation the shooting of the club's current production began in April and has since continued to schedule. Shots have been taken at Piccadilly Circus Underground Station, of the Sutton Symphony Orchestra and in a local restaurant (negative stock, Plus X for interiors, and Pan X for exteriors, being used). The unit is particularly grateful for the co-operation afforded it during the filming of these scenes.

Skegness Photographic & Cine Society (*Hon. Sec. : Godfrey C. Farmer, 226, Drummond Road, Skegness, Lincs.*). Formerly known as the Skegness Photographic Club, this society has been renamed to indicate more accurately its interest in cine matters. At the local Arts and Crafts Exhibition held recently, film shows lasting two hours were given twice daily. All the films shown were members' own productions, an 8mm. diary of local events, *Skegness Cavalcade*, proving the most popular. Scenes for the society's 16mm. film, based on the theme "coal to gas," are now being filmed. New members are welcome.

Slough F.S. (*Hon. Sec. : Miss Joan Weedon, 11, College Avenue, Slough, Bucks.*) *Stop Thief*, the club's first production, is now nearly finished. Although it runs only to about 50ft. it has given members valuable experience. The possibility of members visiting local cinema projection rooms and professional film studios are being discussed. High Wycombe Film Society's *Fall Circle* and *Paper Boat* were screened by a member of the society who visited Slough recently.

(Continued on page 278)

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Here is the first list of forthcoming presentations of the "Amateur Cine World" 1949 National Amateur Film Awards. Final details of several shows scheduled to take place during the period covered by this list have not yet been completed. Will the organisers please forward them as soon as possible so that they may be included in later lists?

The films are fully booked up to June, 1951, and no further bookings can now be accepted. The demand has been exceptionally heavy—we very much regret having had to refuse over fifty applications. Several clubs and other organisations who have been unlucky in what one society called 'the scramble' to book the Ten Best have made useful suggestions

regarding the arrangements for the circulation of the 1950 films. They can be assured that we shall do our best to see that everyone gets a fair chance to present them, but it must be borne in mind that demand exceeds supply and inevitably some applicants must be disappointed.

Readers who wish to see the shows are urged to apply early for tickets, for which they should send stamped addressed envelopes to the addresses below (not to A.C.W.). The programme consists of the following: "Post Haste," "Meet Me in the Local," "Paper Boat," "Nemesis," "Only for Telling," "The River Is Spanned," "The Beginning" and extracts from "Nature's Way" and "Eggs for Breakfast."

	Date of Show	Theatre	Time	Presented by	Tickets
BIRMINGHAM	Fri., Sat., June 30th, July 1st	St. Basil's Church Hall, Heath Mill Lane, Deritend, B'ham	7.15 p.m.	Birmingham Cine Arts Society	Tickets (2s.) from F. A. Inshaw & Corrie Croft, Sheldon, B'ham.
NORWICH	Tues., July 4th	Stuart Hall, St. Andrews, Norwich	7.15 p.m.	Norwich Amateur Cine Society	Tickets (2s.) from Mrs. J. Chettleburgh, 130, Magdalen Road, Norwich
LONDON	Wed., Aug. 30th	Brotherhood Bldg., Knights Hill, West Norwood, S.E.27	8.0 p.m.	Astral Cine Club	Admission by programme (1s. 6d.) from R. A. Green, 29, Woodland Road, S.E.19
BRISTOL	Fri., Sept. 8th	Shepherd's Hall, 71, Old Market Street, Bristol, 2	7.45 p.m.	Phoenix Cine Club	Tickets (2s.) from D. E. Lane, 27, Longfield Road, St. Andrews Park, Bristol, 7
OSWESTRY	Tues., Wed., Sept. 12th, 13th	Oswestry & District Arts Club, Oswestry Road, Oswestry	8.0 p.m.	Oswestry and District Arts Club	Tickets (1s. 6d.) from Miss R. D. Brindley, 1, Stanley Place, Oswestry, Salop.
LONDON	Wed., Sept. 13th	St. Matthias Church, Hall, Rushgrove Avenue, N.W.9	8.0 p.m.	Hendon Camera and Cine Club	Tickets for each show (2s.) from J. G. Ball, 69, Springfield Mount, N.W.9
	Thurs., Sept. 14th	Cornwall Assembly Rooms, White Lion Hotel, Edgware	8.0 p.m.	(Edgware show by arrangement with the Edgware Photographic Society)	
CROYDON	Tues., Oct. 3rd	The Elmwood School, Lodge Road, Croydon	5.30 p.m.	Croydon Teachers' Film Society	Tickets for each show (1s.) from E. C. Hedges, The Overbury Secondary Modern School, Overbury Crescent, Addington, Croydon, or Roger Smith, Parley Oaks School, Bynes Road, South Croydon.
	Wed., Oct. 4th	The Overbury Senior Mixed School, Addington	7.30 p.m.		
	Thurs., Oct. 5th	The Parley Oaks School, Bynes Road, Croydon	7.30 p.m.		
	Fri., Oct. 6th	West Thornton Community Centre, The Pond, Thornton Heath	7.30 p.m.		
WOLVERHAMPTON	Fri., Oct. 6th	Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton	8.0 p.m.	Wulfrun Amateur Cine Club	Tickets (2s.) from F. J. Nokes, 93, Allen Road, Wolverhampton
LINCOLN	Tues., Oct. 17th	New Co-op Hall, Freeschool Lane, Lincoln	7.30 p.m.	Lincoln Camera Club	Tickets (1s. 6d.) from N. Jebson, 10, Pennell Street, Lincoln
LYTHAM ST. ANNES	Wed., Oct. 28th	Ansdell Institute, Woodlands Road, Ansdell	7.30 p.m.	Lytham St. Annes Cine Society	Tickets (free) from C. P. Ramsbotham, 23, Ansdell Road North, Lytham St. Annes (Silver collection).

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News from the Societies (contd.)

Southall Photographic & C.C. (Hon. Sec.: W. B. Oliver, 42, Betham Road, Greenford, Middlesex). High-light of this month's activities will be the club party which, attended by 75 members and friends, is to be filmed for *The Second Man* (8mm.). The rules for next year's annual club competition are to be re-framed. Films screened this month included *The Curse of Calin* (16mm.), *Bill Jackson* (9.5mm.), and *Park Bench* (8mm.).

Stoke-on-Trent A.C.S. (Hon. Sec.: W. A. Cooper, 17, Eleanor Crescent, Newcastle, Staffs). This society ended its winter season with a dinner and dance followed by a show of some pre-war prize-winning films from the I.A.C. library. These included *Smugglers' Cave*, by H. J. Arundell with which he won the British Empire Trophy outright when he was a member of this society. A week later member John Martin's *Man On the Road* was screened for the new members. "One wonders," writes the hon. sec., "how much progress has been made since the days when these films were new."

Victorian A.C.S. (Hon. Sec.: B. A. Bennett, Box 127OL, G.P.O., Melbourne, Australia). Feature of this society's main projection night in April was a programme of 16mm. sound films from the Shell Co. library. Members of the Melbourne Camera Club were invited to a special show of members' 8mm., 9.5mm. and 16mm. films. On April 19th Mr. R. E. Lord lectured on "How to make your own titles."

Wanstead & Woodford C.C. (Hon. Sec.: W. E. Dodd, 43, Burnham Road, Chingford, E.4). To assist members of this society's newly-formed third production unit, two club films, *Time, Gentlemen Please*, by the senior unit, and *Encounter with Fate* by the junior unit, were screened at a recent club meeting. A record audience of over 100 attended the showing of the winning films in the club competition.

West London F.U. (Hon. Sec.: A. F. Shave, 77a, Adelaide Grove, W.12). *Premature Death* (16mm., 350ft.), this club's second production since November last has now been completed. Rushes of the first scenes of the 8mm. section's comedy film were screened recently. The 9.5mm. production unit began the filming of another comedy over the Whitsun holiday. Suitable locations are now being sought for the 16mm. team which is to make a film in conjunction with a local Scout Group.

Wimbledon C.C. (Hon. Sec.: Miss D. M. Sheppard, 35, Denmark Avenue, S.W.19). *Cannizaro*, made for the Wimbledon Corporation and dealing with the opening to the public of Cannizaro Park has been completed. *There Was An Old Woman*, a 16mm. Kodachrome Road Safety film made for the Wimbledon Corporation has only to be titled, and *The Astral*, current club production, is practically finished. *Spring*, by Newcastle A.C.A. *Our Capital, His First Seaside Holiday, That Reminds Me*, and *What the Eye Doesn't See* were screened by Mr. T. Stewart recently in a programme of 8mm. colour films.

Wulfrun A.C.C. (Hon. Sec.: G. Hayward, 32, Rupert Street, Wolverhampton). This club now has two film units—one for 16mm. and 8mm. members and the other for 9.5mm. enthusiasts. *Eggs for Breakfast* by Peter Bowen of this society, gained a Silver Plaque in the 1949 National Amateur Film Awards competition, while J. Verney's *All at Sea* was Highly Commended. Norval Baker's *Landed Hands* (9.5mm. won the Challenge Plaque for the best film in this club's members' own competition—films that had previously won prizes were not eligible. A voucher for the purchase of cine equipment was awarded in another competition to the member producing the best home-made gadget.

Films for the Home Show

A selection of new and recent additions to the film libraries. Abbreviations used : M. minute ; D. director ; number in brackets thus : (2) indicates number of reels ; P. indicates film is for sale outright.

16mm. SOUND FEATURES

G.B. Film Library

Portrait from Life. 90m. D. Terence Fisher. Mai Zetterling, Robert Beatty, Guy Rolfe. Superb acting from Mai Zetterling in this drama of a search in Germany for a professor's daughter. Interesting story with drama, thrills and suspense and some light relief.

Look Before You Love. 92m. D. Harold Huth. Margaret Lockwood, Griffith Jones, Norman Wooland. Entertaining story of a girl who marries a handsome gambler at the cost of her job and then discovers that he is an international crook.

Third Time Lucky. 92m. D. Gordon Parry. Glynis Johns, Dermot Walsh, Charles Goldner. Underworld melodrama of an attractive girl "adopted" by a gambler as his mascot.

Once a Jolly Swagman. 100m. D. Jack Lee. Dirk Bogarde, Bonar Colleano, Rene Asherson. Authentic story of the speedway track, taking one realistically behind the scenes.

Ron Harris

Mr. Belvedere Goes to College. 83m. D. Elliott Nugent. Clifton Webb, Shirley Temple, Tom Drake. In order to claim a financial award Lynn Belvedere has to have a university degree. The comic possibilities of a middle-aged undergraduate cramming a four year course into one year have been fully exploited and, as in *Sitting Pretty*, Clifton Webb gives a delightful performance.

Call Northside 777. 111m. D. Henry Hathaway. James Stewart, Richard Conte, Lee J. Cobb. Exciting story based on official documents of a man wrongly sentenced to life imprisonment. After eleven years of toil the prisoner's mother offers a reward for information about the murder and a newspaper reporter successfully takes up the case on her behalf.

The Foxes of Harrow. 118m. D. John M. Stahl. Rex Harrison, Maureen O'Hara. Romantic melodrama filmed against the picturesque background of America's South in the early 1800's. Rex Harrison gives a competent performance as Stephen Fox, a reckless gambler.

Belle Starr's Daughter. 86m. George Montgomery,



The Regent (Cecil Parker) toasts his daughter's unborn child. (Wigmore Film to be released in August)

Rod Cameron, Ruth Roman. Fast-moving story of how a U.S. marshal works to break the ruthless rule of a gang of outlaws and bring law and order to the troubled territory.

Nightmare Alley. 112m. Tyrone Power, Joan Blondell, Coleen Gray. Tyrone Power plays a new type of character role in this drama of the fairground.

Wigmore Films

Down to Earth. 101m. (Colour). Rita Hayworth, Larry Parks. Entertaining "Mr. Jordan" comedy. *It Had To Be You*. 98m. D. Don Hartman and Rudolph Mate. Ginger Rogers, Cornel Wilde. Entertaining film about a scatterbrained girl who, after having been led to the altar by three different men whom she refused to marry at the last moment, is on her way to marry a fourth. Complications ensue when she meets a "Red" Indian who refuses to be shaken off.

The First Gentleman. 111m. D. Cavalcanti. Jean-Pierre Aumont, Joan Hopkins, Cecil Parker. Drama of Regency romances and the love between a Princess and a 'penniless Prince.'

Best Man Wins. 74. Edgar Buchanan, Anna Lee, *Golden Lady*. 60m. D. Derwin Abrahams, Charles Starrett. Western about a prospector who is kidnapped by outlaws who hope to discover where the gold is located, but is rescued by the Durango Kid.

Night Club Girl. 68m. Virginia Grey, Michael Duane, Gene Krupa and his Orchestra. *Heart Royal*. 67m. Paul Campbell, Gloria Henry. All the above for release in August.

16mm. SOUND SHORTS

G.B. Film Library

The House Cat. 10m. (Colour). David Hand. "Animaland" cartoon.

Colony in Colour. 16m. (Colour). Southern Rhodesia.

The Year Round. 10m. Musical.

Guess What, No. 10. 16m. Popular quiz with commentary by Ronald Waldman.

Will Europe Unite? 20m. This Modern Age No. 28. *Via London*. (2). Documentary about the Port of London Authority.

Ron Harris

There Shall Be Wings, *Olympic Class*, *The Big Harvest*. 20th Century Fox shorts.

Amphibious Fighters, *Good Dogs*. Grantland-Rice Sportlights.



Dirk Bogarde and Bonar Colleano in a scene from "Once a Jolly Swagman" (G.B.)



Tyrone Power and Joan Blondell star in "Nightmare Alley." (Ron Harris)

At the Bird Farm, In Current Events. "Speaking of Animals" series.

Johnny "Scat" Davies and his Orchestra. Musical.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

King-sized Canary, Henpecked Hoboes, Puss N'Toots, Northwest Hounded Police, Kitty Foiled. All 8m. colour shorts.

Just Suppose. 9m.

Peak Films

I'm a Rovin' Cowboy, South Rampart Street Parade, Hawaiian War Chant, Frenesi, Cleopatra's Nightmare. All 4m. releases in the new "Min" series.

Wigmore Films

Wedlock Deadlock. Joe De Rita; Two Nuts in a Rut, Schilling and Lane; Radio Romeo, Harry Von Zell. All two-reelers.

The Way They Tread, Rabbits to You, On the Carpet, Keynote, How It's Done, Forty Minutes at the Zoo. British documentaries.

Your Problems Solved

A selection of replies to recent enquiries. All answers are sent by post if a stamped addressed envelope is forwarded.

HOLIDAY FOR TWO

Could you give me some advice on the preparation of a script for a holiday film in which my wife and I can appear as well as operate the camera?—J.D.M.C., Wolverhampton.

With only two in the party, it is always a problem to arrange a script in which both appear. If the theme is the place or the journey, and the humans are incidental, it is best merely to include them occasionally in appropriate shots. If both are to appear continually, however, some subterfuge has to be adopted, such as by-play scenes with a still camera in which the difficulty is narrated and thus capital is made of it.

If the holiday town has a cine society, it is probable that a cameraman can happily be borrowed for an hour or two to film the necessary shots in which both appear. It must also be remembered that scenes such as operating slot-machines on the pier are easy to cover entirely in inter-cut close-ups; the method is:—

C.S. man looks and points . . .

L.S. pier entrance

C.S. wife nods

T.S. feet walking

C.S. coin paid over

C.S. turnstile clicks

L.S. pier

C.S. "try your strength" machine

C.S. wife puts in penny and tries

C.S. man's hand appears, penny returned (man holds camera in one hand)

C.S. wife pockets penny and smiles triumphantly.

TALKING ANIMALS

(i) I saw a film recently in which animals were made to appear to talk. How is this done? (ii) Has the old idea of

Aren't We All (1). Novelty.

Thrills of Music, No. 9 (1). Boyd Raeburn and his Orchestra.

Thrills of Music, No. 10 (1). Claude Thornhill and his Orchestra.

Seeing Things, Spit and Polish, Draughtsman, Cider. Two-reel British documentaries.

Community Singing, Nos. 69, 70, 72, 73, 76, 78, 80, 82, 84. All one-reelers.

Rolling Down to Reno; Sing a Song of Six Pants;

Fiddlers Three. Two reel Three Stooges' comedies.

Man or Mouse, Stirling Holloway; Eight Ball Andy, Andy Clyde; Silly Billie, Billie Burke. All two-reel comedies.

Follow Through With Sam Byrd, Tennis Rhythm,

Show Dogs. One reel sports interest.

All the above to be released in August.

16mm. SOUND SERIALS

Wigmore Films

Deadwood Dick. (Fifteen episodes). Don Douglas, Lorna Gray.

Black Arrow. (Fifteen episodes). Robert Scott, Adele Jergens.

The above for release in August.

16mm. SILENT SHORTS

Peak Films

River Bus, 90 Miles of History, Winchester. All 4m. productions in the "Souvenir" series. Mainly one shot to one sub-title. Cover the ground well but lacking in detail shots.

Brumas the Baby Bear. 4m.

9.5mm. SILENT

Pathescope

Skyway Masters (1). Glimpses of the aircraft of the future, including shots of the Brabazon, the American 100 ton Flying Wing and the Comet.

Brumas—Polar Maid. 30ft. Newsreel pictures of the famous polar bear cub.

using two carbon sticks as a projector light source been superseded? (iii) When using the Dekko does the length of exposure when taking single frames alter depending upon the speed at which the camera is set to run?—J.W.C., Fernside.

For this effect the individual frames of the selected shot are individually enlarged to about full plate size, the movements of the animals' lips are then drawn on these photographs cartoon-fashion. The altered set of photos is then filmed frame by frame.

(ii) The two carbons are still the basis of the cinema projector arc, but now the positive and negative carbons are both horizontal and parallel to the project on axis, the latter fitting through a hole in the centre of a large reflector which thus faces the crater in the positive and reflects all the light therefrom on to the gate.

(ii) The length of exposure in single frames always alters, but the amount depends on the camera. With the Dekko, to get exposure equivalent to normal speed, when taking single frames, set the speed to about 24 f.p.s.

IMPROVISED TELEPHOTO LENS

In order to get a telephoto effect with the aid of a 2nd divergent lens, what distance in front of my 1st camera lens should it be placed? How can I find the focal length of a divergent lens?—J.G.M., Westport.

We have often stated, and we repeat, that good results cannot be obtained by these additional lenses for telephoto effects unless the lenses are designed and made by the makers of the main lens. However, provided they are lined up with great care, and bearing in mind that the f-numbers are all changed, they can be used to increase the apparent focal length of the main lens—the latter being, of course, the correct method since the former only allows comparatively small changes in focal length to be achieved.

Trial and error seems the best way for experimenters to do the job. The formulae depend on the node position of the main lens assembly, and this is very difficult to determine. To find the focal length of a negative (concave) lens, use it with a convex lens, determine the combined focal length, and thus deduce the required figure. We, however, have always found it best and simplest to get the figure from an optician.

WHAT SORT OF HOLIDAY FILM?

When my children were young it was easy to make an interesting holiday film—kids paddling, bathing, making sand castles, etc., with shots of waves and individual close-ups for continuity. Now that the "children" are almost grown up they feel that the camera should record details of places visited rather than the family taking the holiday. What are your views?—E.R.B., Rickmansworth.

You have reached one of the inevitable partings of the ways. We have always found that, without exception, the most successful family films involving grown-up "children" are those in the film-play category, that is, a complete story or episode, filmed from a detailed script. The trouble is that subjects are not easy to concoct, and an additional worry is that in many ways the amount of work involved is excessive.

The second best method, surely, is to hand over the direction to the most competent of the "children," yourself retaining only the camera work. You should give ample warning, of course, allow the new director his head, and make the necessary credit title. The third method is a judicious compromise: a prologue or epilogue, with perhaps some linking scene in the middle, showing all the members of the family; then the rest of the film is purely scenic, recording objectively the places visited. This does have the advantage of relieving the party of those sudden calls to act that seem so easy to the cameraman-director, but are rather infuriating to the victims, in particular when their hair feels all anyhow, or they have left behind their glamorous scarf.

SUPPLEMENTARY LENS FOR THE SIEMENS B

My Siemens "B" camera (f/2.8, 20mm. Gloukor lens) has a simplified focusing system, one position covering

5 ft. to 10 ft. and the other 10 ft. to infinity. At the 5 ft. to 10 ft. position the lens plate is marked 28 ft. to 4 ft. with portrait lens; at the 10 ft. to infinity position, 3 ft. to 5 ft. What should be the focal length of a supplementary lens? S.R.K., Rotherham.

It is not easy to answer your question, because the setting of the camera lens is not known; but we are almost certain that the correct focal length is 1.5 metres; you will thus be safe in getting a 5 ft. focal length supplementary lens.

INDEXING FOR FOCUS AND STOPS

I have made a focusing mount for an ex-Govt. G4S camera gun 2in. f/3.5 lens. Could you tell me how I can index stops and focus so that I can match them with the other lenses fitted to my turret-head camera?—T.C.P., Kettering.

Set the iris stops in such a way that the stop number equals the focal length divided by the diameter of the iris opening. Thus, in your case, if you set the diameter to 1/2 in., using, say, a drill shank, the iris scale should point to f/8. The focusing scale you do simply by calculation, knowing the pitch of your mount, and applying the rule given in *Running Commentary* in the Nov. 1948 issue of A.C.W.

MOVING BACKGROUND TITLES

Could I successfully make titles with a moving background by filming a street scene through a sheet of glass, lettered in white, held 18in. in front of my camera fitted with an 18in. portrait attachment?—A.W.S., Peterborough.

No, using the 18in. lens you could never get the background in focus. The method you suggest can only be employed within the depth-of-focus range of your lens. At f/8, with a 2-metre portrait attachment, the depth extends from 3 ft. to infinity. If, therefore, you can fix your glass-mounted title at 3 ft., it can be done. Alternatively, you can compromise slightly with loss of focus on the background. By far the best method is to film the background first, remove the charger and wind back the film, then film the title in the titler at 18 ins., using the portrait lens.

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INDEX TO ADVERTISERS

LONDON

Actina Ltd.	283
Associated British Pathe Ltd.	271
Neville Brown & Co. Ltd.	267
Camera Craft Ltd.	210
Cinemart	200
Cinex Ltd.	196
City Sale & Exchange Ltd.	214, 215
Dallmeyer, J. H., Ltd.	212
Dekko Cameras Ltd.	212
Dollond & Atchison, Ltd. and provincial branches	216, 217
Embassy Films	Cover
Fountain Press Ltd.	272
Gevaert Ltd.	199
Heaton, Wallace, Ltd.	195, 197
Iford Ltd.	211
Kays Ltd.	276
Lewis, R. G. (Cine) Ltd.	Cover
M.G.M. Pictures Ltd.	281
Mindel, M. D.	202
Pathescope Ltd.	198, 202
Peach Cine Ltd.	206
Penrose Cine Ltd.	275
Photax Ltd.	204
Rigby, Robert	198
Sanda Hunter & Co. Ltd.	210
Scott-Russell, J.	267
Turner, E. G.	208
Vauxhall Film Hire	286
Westminster Photographic Exchange Ltd.	213
Wigmore Films Ltd.	Cover

PROVINCES

Beds.	
University Cameras	210
Cambs.	
University Cameras	210
Ches.	
Egginton, A. G. & Son Ltd.	287
Montague Fisher Ltd.	286
Mid-Ches. Film Library	286
W. R. Rose Ltd.	268

Essex

Bruce, Chas. W.	284
Patmore, Clive	275

Glos.

Duncombe, M. W., Ltd.	206
Salanson Ltd.	286

Hants.

Moxham, E. T.	283
Rowland, Morton & Co. Ltd.	285

Herts.

Townsend & Crowther Ltd.	212
--------------------------	-----

Kent

Associated Cine Equipments	282, 286
Amateur Cine Service	208

Lancs.

Brun Educational Films	285
Cinephoto Ltd.	272

Leics.

Gorse E.	284
Holdings Fidelity Films	204

Lincolns.

Jones, Allen	286
Jones, F. E.	285

Middlesex.

Kirkham Film Service	284
National Film Agency	268

Norfolk.

Poffitt, R. W., Ltd.	209
Ranelagh Cine Service	275

Northumberland

Turners (Newcastle upon Tyne) Ltd.	205
------------------------------------	-----

Notts.

Briggs, D.	282
Carlton Cine Service	278
Heathcote	272
J. B. Film Co.	287

Somerset

Gray's Camera Shop	286
--------------------	-----

Staffs.

Bowen & Verney Co.	287
Pearson, J.	278

Surrey

Balchin, J. H.	286
Croydon Cine Exchange	285
I.A.C. Ltd.	200
Pyke, T.	208
Walton Films	287

Sussex

Boyd, G.	204
Westminster Photographic Exchange Ltd.	213

Warwickshire

Birmingham Commercial Films	206
Brathwaite, M. Ltd.	287
Reosound Eng. Co., Ltd.	200

Yorks.

Bateson J.	284
Baker & Hyman Ltd.	203
Childe, Geo. Ltd.	286
Cinesmith	260
Crookes Film Library	287
Royal Sutcliffe Cine Equipments	282
Saville, John & Sons	207
Sheffield Photo Co. Ltd.	201
Whites (Tanks)	290

WALES

Sound Film Services	287
---------------------	-----

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